

THE CARLTON TRAIL



THE CARLTON TRAIL

*The Broad Highway into the Saskatchewan Country
From the Red River Settlement,
1840-1880*

R. C. Russell



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Preface

The author's interest in old prairie trails dates back to the year 1906, when his father homesteaded a quarter-section of land situated about eighteen miles north of Lipton, Saskatchewan.

In those days there was not a mile of straight road between that town and our homestead. We followed the Touchwood Trail, with its accompanying telegraph line, for about twelve miles, then branched off on the North Trail that led to the Birch Lake district. After following it for about five miles we blazed a brand new trail to our prairie home.

The Touchwood Trail passed about four miles to the west of our homestead and the old Carlton Trail passed about eight miles north-east of us. The two trails joined each other in the edge of the Touchwood Hills a short distance north-west of the site where the town of Lestock now stands. For a number of years I saw considerable traffic passing along the Touchwood Trail. It consisted of wagons, democrats and buggies drawn by horses or oxen, and many of the wagons were piled high with settlers' effects. While the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway was being built through the eastern part of the Touchwood Hills district a great amount of "freighting" was done along this trail. But the Carlton Trail was almost entirely deserted when I first saw it.

In later years I made the acquaintance of the Carlton Trail in the Humboldt and Duck Lake districts. As I learned more about its history, I became fascinated with tales of happenings that took place along its course and finally decided to write the story of this trail as a hobby. My earnest hope is that my readers will derive as much pleasure as I have from the stories that I gleaned from various books relating to the Carlton Trail, and that the excerpts from these books, contained in the following story, will stimulate my readers to hunt up the original books and peruse many of them in their entirety. With this thought in mind a complete list of these books and shorter articles is appended at the end of my story of the Trail. They are referred to by number throughout the text.

A brief discussion is included of several events that affected the history of the Carlton Trail more or less directly. These include the construction of the first telegraph line across the Prairie Provinces, the coming of the North West Mounted Police, the surveying of the land for settlement, the building of the first transcontinental railway in Canada, and the Riel Rebellion of 1885.

Although the main emphasis in this booklet is laid on the story of the Carlton Trail and not on the history of the Prairie Provinces, great care has been taken to present historical matters accurately.

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I am greatly indebted to the various writers and publishers listed in the bibliography for parts of the text material and for three of the figures.

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THE CARLTON TRAIL

Among the many winding trails that criss-crossed the plains and parklands of the North West Territories during the four decades preceding the advent of the transcontinental railway, none was more important than the Carlton Trail, also known as the Saskatchewan Trail. A great deal of romance is bound up in the written and unwritten records of these old trails. The Carlton Trail led across plain and marsh, hill and dale, coulee, creek, and river, from Fort Garry, at the junction of the Red and the Assiniboine Rivers, to Fort Carlton, more than five hundred miles to the north-west, on the bank of the North Saskatchewan River. Fort Carlton stood on the east side of that river at a point about fifteen miles west of the present town of Duck Lake.

The principal vehicle used on the Carlton Trail was the Red River Cart (Fig. 1). This was a two-wheeled vehicle of wood. No metal was used in its construction, although shaganappi (green buffalo hide) was used to some extent to bind its parts together. The cart had a pair of shafts between which to place the ox or pony that was to haul it, and a rectangular rack with a floor of planking balanced on the axle. At times a canvas cover was put over the rack to protect passengers or perishable freight from rain or snow. In some cases a covering was thrown over the cart and the owner slept on the ground beneath it when camping at night.

When freighters were travelling along the trail with long strings of heavily loaded carts, each man looked after several units, a unit consisting of one pony or ox and one cart. Each freighter drove the animal hitched to his leading cart and tied the next succeeding animal to a rear corner of this cart, so that the animal walked in the rut of the wheel in front of it. Each succeeding animal under the driver's care followed in the wheel track of the cart immediately ahead. As a result of this arrangement, the carts did not travel in a single line but were spread out so that the trail consisted of as many as sixteen ruts all worn to about the same depth. This method reduced the danger of the ruts becoming too deep for convenient use and lessened the chances of getting stuck in wet spots on the prairie. The old cart trails differed in appearance from the trails made at a later date by wagons, buckboards and buggies. The latter trails consisted of two wheel marks and a path for single horses between them (Fig. 2).

The route followed by the Carlton Trail is shown on the map (Fig. 3). It started out along what is now Portage Avenue in Winnipeg and followed the north bank of the Assiniboine River fairly closely until it reached Portage la Prairie. This portion of the trail passed over low-lying plains dotted with occasional sloughs and intersected by a few creeks flowing into the Assiniboine River. During wet seasons the trail here led across many "sloughs of despond," and woeful tales were told of carts becoming stuck in the tenacious mud, and of their owners having to unload them and



FIG. 1—*Explorer's camp near the elbow of the North Saskatchewan River. Note the two Red River carts, one of which is provided with a canvas cover.*

"double up" their ponies or oxen to pull their carts from the bogs before reloading their possessions.

According to the map contained in the book "Description of the Province of Manitoba" (5), the trail branched at Portage la Prairie into two alternative routes for the next ninety miles or so. The southern branch continued on in a westerly direction for about twenty miles and then veered slightly to the south-west as it passed through the district around the sources of Squirrel Creek and Pine Creek. This branch appears to have followed an old buffalo-hunting trail for some distance. The latter proceeded on to the place where Brandon now stands, then turning in a south-westerly direction it ran across country to a bend in the Souris River, from whence it passed on to the plains along the Missouri River. The southern branch of the Carlton Trail departed from the above-mentioned hunting trail near the west side of Section 7, Township 11, Range 8, west of the First Meridian. From this point it travelled in a north-westerly direction, passing about two miles west of Gregg, a station on the main line of the Canadian National Railway, about midway between Portage la Prairie and Rivers, Manitoba. Continuing in a north-westerly direction, it crossed the Whitemud River near Oberon, and the Minnedosa River (then known as the Little Saskatchewan) about four miles west of the present town of Minnedosa. It rejoined the northern branch of the trail approximately twenty miles west and five miles north of that town.

The northern branch travelled north-westerly from Portage la Prairie to Westbourne. Then veering to the west it passed close to Woodside and

Gladstone. In doing so it crossed the Whitemud River three times. About twelve miles west of Gladstone it swung to the north for several miles, to avoid a bend in the Whitemud and then passed three miles north of Neepawa and crossed the Little Saskatchewan River two miles north-east of Minnedosa.

From Portage la Prairie to Fort Ellice the trail traversed a considerable amount of higher land and crossed several creeks and rivers flowing either north and east toward Lake Manitoba, or south toward the Assiniboine. Some of these streams flowed through relatively deep valleys with abrupt slopes at the edges, which were difficult to ascend or descend with heavily loaded carts. Although these streams did not constitute formidable barriers in times of low water, they were real hazards when they were in flood. In this stretch the trail mounted from the level of the first prairie steppe



FIG. 2—Prairie trail in the Touchwood Hills district. The bluff is composed mainly of Trembling Poplar (*Aspen*) and several shrubby species of willow.

to that of the second, climbing from an altitude of about 700 feet above sea level in the Red River Valley, to an altitude of about 1,600 feet at Fort Ellice. At this point the trail branched again for a short distance. The left branch crossed the Assiniboine River below its junction with the Qu'Appelle and called at Fort Ellice, a Hudson's Bay Company Post, built on the plateau a mile or so west of the Assiniboine Valley, near a deep coulee through which Beaver Creek entered the Assiniboine River. The right branch crossed the Assiniboine above its junction with the Qu'Appelle. These branches were reunited on Section 14-17-29, west of the First Meridian, at a point about four miles north-west of Fort Ellice. As both the Assiniboine and Qu'Appelle Valleys were about two hundred

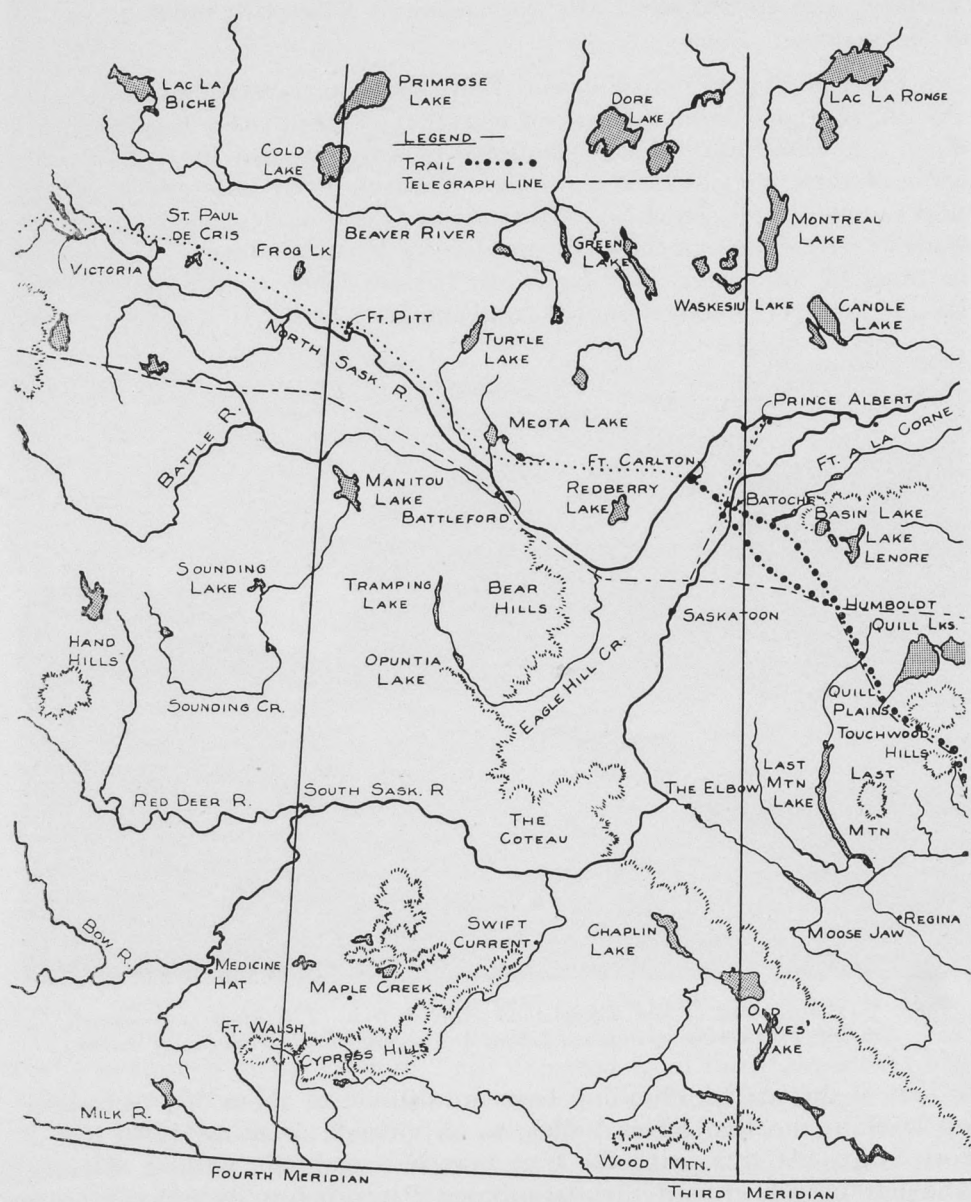
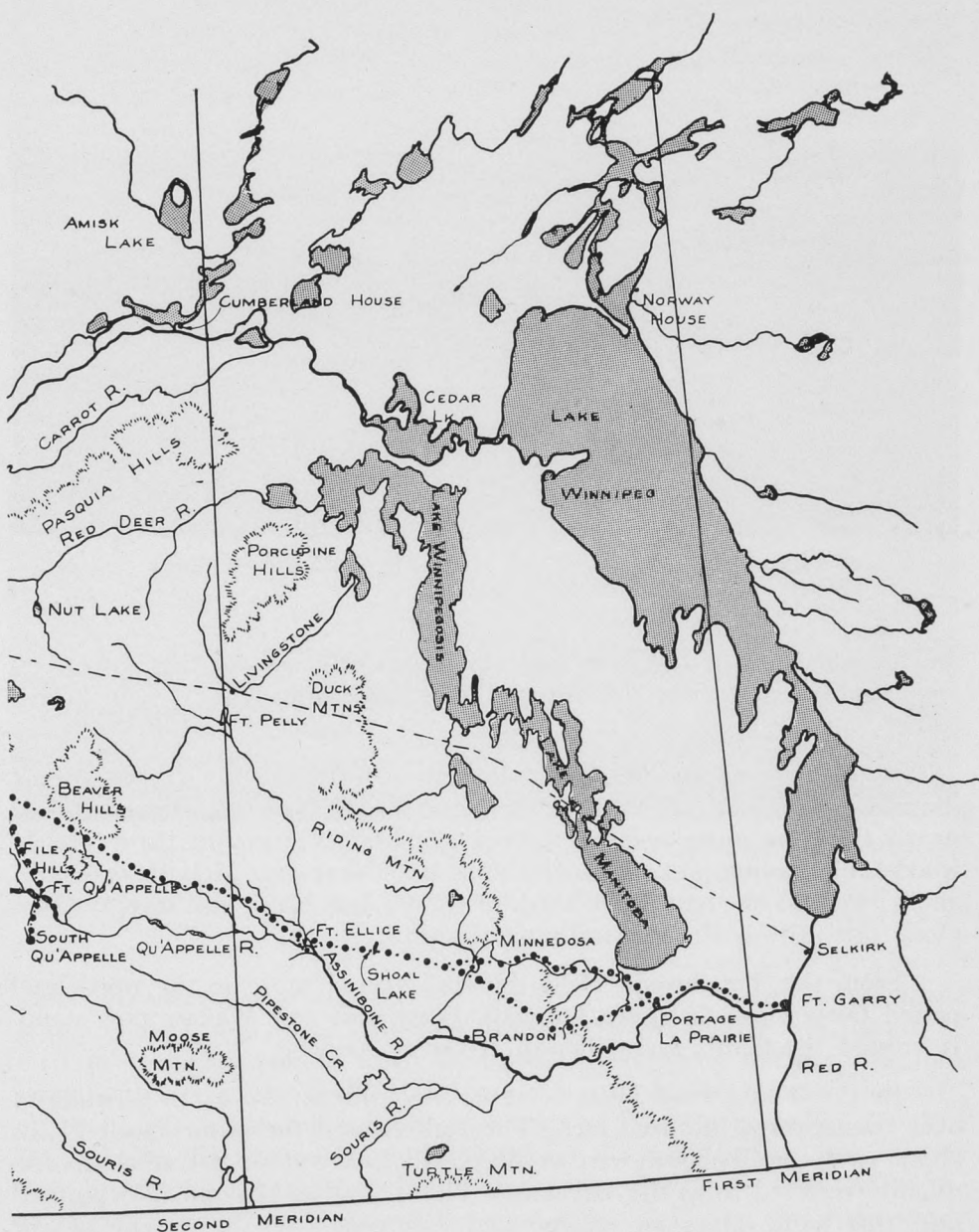


FIG. 3—Map depicting a portion of Western Canada before the Prairie Provinces were formed. The route followed by the Carlton Trail, connecting Fort Garry and Fort Carlton, is shown, and also the continuation of this trail to a point just beyond the Indian Mission called Victoria, that lay on the way to Edmonton. Branches of the Carlton Trail, leading to Prince Albert



and to South Qu'Appelle are indicated. In addition, the Dominion Government's telegraph line from Selkirk to Edmonton is marked, with its branches from Humboldt to South Qu'Appelle and from Clark's Crossing to Prince Albert.



FIG. 4—Rolling park land near Dana, Sask. The south branch of the Carlton Trail passed within a few miles of Dana.

and fifty feet deep, and both had very steep sides, descending into them and climbing out again was arduous work, especially with heavily loaded carts.

From Fort Ellice the trail followed a north-westerly course to the Touchwood Hills. In later years the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway followed nearly the same route as far as the town of Lestock, near the third Touchwood Hills trading post of the Hudson's Bay Company. Melville was built about two and one-half miles north of the Carlton Trail and several towns along this railway lie practically on the trail.

From the Touchwood Hills the trail veered more to the north and passed fairly close to where Lanigan, Humboldt and Wakaw now stand. It crossed the South Saskatchewan River at Batoche.

In the Touchwood Hills some of the hilltops rise to an altitude of over twenty-three hundred feet. The trail crossed the saline Quill Plains about twelve miles south-west of Big Quill Lake. This flat area was frequently referred to as the Great Salt Plains, but as Macoun (21) pointed out, this name gives an exaggerated impression of the extent of the non-arable land within this area. Here again travellers expended a great deal of energy and profanity struggling through the mosquito-infested marshes in wet seasons. However, as compensations, the country between the Touchwood post and Batoche offered many fine vistas from the higher places along the way (Fig. 4). Miles and miles of rich pastureland stretching away in level or rolling expanses to the distant horizon, and dotted with plenty of bluffs to supply fuel and protection from the wind,

and usually affording numerous sloughs (ponds or marshes) of water to refresh man and beast at the camping places.

The last major obstacle before reaching Fort Carlton was the mighty South Saskatchewan River. True, the Hudson's Bay Company usually kept a boat at Batoche in which travellers could ferry their goods across the river, but the horses and oxen "had to swim for it." Also the boat had to be tracked upstream some distance before starting across for the opposite



FIG. 5—Fort Carlton as it appeared in 1872, with the North Saskatchewan River in the background. The fort stood on a level bench about twenty feet above the level of the river and a hundred feet below the plateau to the east of the bench.

shore because the strong current carried it rapidly downstream while it was being rowed across. In flood times, or when the ice was beginning to form in the autumn, or when the ice was breaking up in the springtime, crossing this river was a very dangerous venture. Having crossed the river, an easy stage led through sandy parklands to Fort Carlton (Fig. 5). The first fort on this site was built in 1810, and the last fort was destroyed by fire during the rebellion of 1885. For several decades it was one of the principal posts of the Hudson's Bay Company. Being on the main waterway and also on the main land route across Rupert's Land, it was visited by many people both great and humble.

In later years a branch of the Carlton Trail was formed between Humboldt and Duck Lake. It followed a more southerly route. It passed close to the sites of Bruno and Bremen, and crossed the South Saskatchewan at Gabriel's Crossing. This ferrying point was named after Riel's lieutenant,

Gabriel Dumont, who operated its ferry for a time. From this point the trail swung to the north and rejoined the older route near Duck Lake. It will be noticed later on in this account that some of the people, to whom we shall refer, crossed the river at Batoche and others crossed it at Gabriel's Crossing, depending on which branch of the trail they followed.

The Carlton Trail and the creaking Red River cart bore much the same relationship to the Saskatchewan country as did the Oregon Trail and the covered wagon to the Pacific Northwest region of the United States. To properly understand the genesis of this trail we must go back some distance in history and consider briefly the early developments of the fur trade in the vast region then known as Rupert's Land. For some time after the formation of the Hudson's Bay Company in 1670, it had trading posts on the shores of Hudson Bay, but none inland. Consequently, the Indians who dealt with the Company had to travel from their own hunting grounds to the shore of the Bay in order to take their furs to the Company's posts. This entailed a great loss of time and many hardships for the Indians who lived far inland. By about 1750 the French fur traders from Canada had penetrated to the northwest, through what is now Western Manitoba and Eastern Saskatchewan as far as Fort a la Corne, and had cut off much of the trade from the English posts on the Bay. Even after Canada became a British possession in 1763 private traders and large organizations, such as the Northwest Company, continued to penetrate Rupert's Land and to compete for the Indians' furs. It was not until 1774 that the Hudson's Bay Company shook off its lethargy and commenced erecting inland posts or forts at which the Indians could trade with comparative ease. This system of posts gradually spread over the forests and prairies to the Rocky Mountains, and even beyond these to the Pacific Ocean.

In order to supply trading goods to the posts east of the Rocky Mountains and bring back furs to York Factory, the company hired Scotsmen, Metis, and Indians to man brigades of York boats and canoes to carry these commodities back and forth. In this way it built up a remarkable transportation system, which continued to function until the approach of railways and steamboats through Minnesota made it easier to bring in goods and take out hides and furs by a new route. The York Factory route was not abandoned by the Churchill and Athabaska River brigades until 1872 (33). During the transition period, starting about 1860, more and more of the transporting was accomplished by means of Red River carts carrying the furs and buffalo hides down to Fort Garry and taking back supplies to the trading posts, largely over the Carlton Trail. In 1867, according to Father Lacombe, one hundred and fourteen carts passed through his Metis settlement at St. Paul de Cris carrying supplies to the Hudson's Bay post at Edmonton. However, the servants of the company were not the only people who made use of the trail connecting Fort Garry with Fort Carlton. Metis from the Red River Settlement, seeking buffalo (American bison) on the prairies and plains of the northwest, or moving to new homes along the Saskatchewan River, followed it



FIG. 6—Buffalo bull at rest on the plain. Many of the Indians and Metis of Rupert's Land secured their livelihood by hunting buffalo.

for various distances. Private traders, missionaries, explorers, Mounted Policemen, governmental dignitaries, and even tourists and sportsmen from far countries travelled it at one time or another. Many of them continued on beyond Carlton to Edmonton or even over the mountains to the Pacific Ocean. Also, many miners from Eastern Canada, bound for the gold fields of British Columbia, chose this overland route rather than the long voyage by sea. Finally, the land surveyors and the early tide of ranchers and farmers, entering the fertile districts which stretched on either side of the great trail throughout its entire length, used it to a greater or less extent. It is our purpose to present extracts from the written records of diverse individuals, from the motley throng mentioned above, and thus gain a truer impression of conditions as they existed in this part of the Canadian North West nearly a century ago.

The Metis and Their Buffalo Hunts

It is hard to say who first created the Carlton Trail. In all probability the eastern portion came into being some time before the whole route was established. Probably some of the Metis of the Red River Settlement marked it out in a westerly direction, as far as Fort Ellice, while going to the country along the south side of the Qu'Appelle Valley to hunt buffalo. Later they may have continued it in a north-westerly direction through the Touchwood Hills to hunt on the Quill Plains. On the other hand, employees of the Hudson's Bay Company may have been the first to mark out this overland route between Fort Garry and Fort Carlton, as an alter-

native to the water route via Lake Winnipeg and the Saskatchewan River. Sir George Simpson made a trip overland from Fort Carlton to Fort Garry in the spring of 1825, but the Carlton Trail was not yet established and he passed north of the Quill Lakes and turned south to Fort Ellice after reaching the upper part of the Assiniboine River (31). However, we know that some of the Metis did go from the Red River Settlement to the districts mentioned in search of buffalo (Fig. 6), while others went west to the Missouri Coteau or south-west to the Missouri River to hunt. We also know that some Metis frequented the country around Fort Carlton with goods to trade to the Indians for furs. Dr. Hector, one of Captain Palliser's party, speaking of the Thickwood Crees whom he met in the winter of 1857-58, twenty miles north-west of Carlton, wrote (37),

"They, for the most part, trade at Fort Carlton, but a great deal of the large quantities of fur which they annually trap has of late years been diverted from the Company by free traders, parties of whom from the Red River spend the winter among the Indians, well supplied with goods, which are furnished to them by the American traders. This rival trading on the whole would be good for the Indians, were it not for the wretched poisonous whiskey which is supplied to them."

From 1868 on, numbers of Metis families moved from the Red River district to the South Saskatchewan River, and settled along its banks from Fish Creek to St. Louis.

Let us pull the curtain aside and look at the romantic life that these semi-nomads led during the summer hunt on the plains. The following graphic description of a buffalo hunt, that occurred in 1850, is taken from the book "Father Lacombe" (13) and refers to the hunt organized at Pembina.

"This was the Golden Age of the Indians and Metis when the bison still roamed the plains in unnumbered thousands. The tender buffalo meat, dried fresh and pounded, made a good food both appetizing and nutritious; the buffalo skins made robes for garments and bedding, hides for tepees and canoes; while on the unwooded plains the sun-dried manure served the purpose for fuel.

"It fell to Father Lacombe's lot to be chaplain of the great hunt in 1850. He was alive to the pleasures and novelty of his new assignment, for all about him the preparations of his people were tinged with joyousness and excitement. . . ."

The Metis of the area were finally all assembled and ready to organize for the hunt.

"No order had been observed up to this time in their mode of arrival or their preparation but Voila! how the scene changes! the fine discipline of a military camp suddenly pervaded the assembly. The hunters held a council to select, by a majority of votes, a chief and ten captains, who in turn selected ten or fifteen others to act as scouts. Then they drew up anew the laws of the hunt. . . . The halfbreed hunter, Wilkie, who had been elected chief, rose at the close of the council and asked for the

hunters' acceptance of these laws as a whole. This being done by a majority of voices the chief declared solemnly: 'If any among you do not approve of these laws, let him leave our camp and come not with us, for once we have set out together from this encampment no one will be free to separate from us.' "

No man left the assembly; they silently approved of its laws. These related to the time and mode of chasing the buffalo and to the penalties fixed for the infringement of any of these laws.

After an early Mass next morning the signal of departure was given by the guide of the day with a little flag. In an instant a great commotion ran through the whole camp. The lodges of skin and the tents were pulled down, the horses were brought into a corral from the prairie and the women made haste to pack into the carts their small household goods. Then the women and children took seats in the carts, the hunters mounted their buffalo runners, and the camp set out on its march. There were from 800 to 1,000 carts in the camp that year, and over a thousand men, women and children, as well as hundreds of fine ponies for buffalo runners, besides cart horses, oxen and innumerable dogs.

Close to the sixth day out the Metis' long lines drew near to the Turtle Mountains. Scouts pushing on ahead saw in the distance an immense herd of buffalo and signalled the good news to their party.

"The information flashed back by the flags was intoxicating. Joy ran through the whole regiment of marching Metis, and the buffalo ponies, keen for the hunt as their masters were, understood the sudden commotion and halt. In a trice the women, children, and old men dragged out the lodgepoles and skins and erected the camp."

The hunting ponies were led aside, swiftly mounted, and in full gallop they flashed along the prairie to the ridge on which the scouts had paused. "On the green rolling prairies stretching before them to the horizon buffalo were grazing, thousands of them, forming a billowy black lake on the prairie."

The captains gave the word and the hunters instantly fell into one long line of attack. "En evant!" the leader cried, and men and horses flew forward with whirlwind velocity. Now the buffalo broke into confused flight as the hunters strove to catch up with them. These hunts were filled with marvels of horsemanship, for the hunters urged their ponies right into the lumbering herd of buffalo, because they usually picked out the better animals as targets and rode right up beside them before firing. Apart from the danger of the horses stumbling in badger holes and throwing their masters in the path of the stampeding herd, the wounded bulls sometimes charged horses and riders and occasionally injured them severely.

As the hunters prepared to shoot they dropped the reins and guided their ponies by pressure of their limbs only. Each hunter carried a powder horn at his belt and bullets in his mouth. He discharged and reloaded his flintlock musket with remarkable dexterity, when it is considered that

during these operations his horse was on the gallop, keeping up with the fleeing buffalo. Sometimes in the hunter's haste he fired his gun when the bullet was not in contact with the powder and then the gun barrel was apt to burst and maim the hunter. On this particular occasion hundreds of buffalo were killed but there were no serious accidents to the hunters.

"The turmoil of the hunt was scarcely over before the stillness of the plains was broken by a new, lighter clamour—delighted women and children hastening from the camp with carts drawn by old ponies to haul back the spoils."

The dead animals were then skinned and cut up, and the meat and hides were loaded on the carts and the remains were left for the numerous wolves which always gathered at the scene of a hunt.

"In picturesque disorder the party made its way back through the cool of the evening air to the fires of the camp by the Turtle Mountains. The meat had been piled on the creaking carts by the women and hunters, and the latter with their labours concluded, walked beside their tired mounts or rode them at a gentle lope over the prairies, preceding the carts and the women-folk. At the camp they turned the ponies free. The hunters sat about the fires, smoking and living the brief, wild hunt over again. Meanwhile the women picked out the choicest bits of fresh meat and cooked a savoury meal for their lords.

"The camp remained at this point for several days while the women, after the centuries-old fashion of their sex, dressed the buffalo skins and dried the meat. They first cut up the meat in very long strips which they stretched to dry on scaffolds made of young trees. After two or three days' exposure to the sun the meat was sufficiently dry for the women to fold it into packages tightly bound with sinew. Then with their stone mallets they pounded the dried meat to powder in wooden bowls, mixing hot grease and dried berries with it, packed the whole into large sacs of buffalo-hide, called by the Metis *taureaux*. This was *pimikkan*, the manna of the Canadian prairies."

After several weeks of travelling and alternately hunting and preserving buffalo meat, these people usually returned to their homes in the settlements along the Red River. There they farmed, in a half-hearted and leisurely fashion, until the fall hunt took place. Much of their harvest of pemmican and hides was exchanged with the traders for the commodities which the latter had to barter.

According to numerous authorities similar hunts were conducted hundreds of times, by the Metis or Indians in different parts of Rupert's Land, during the next twenty-five years. The pemmican and dried meat, secured in this way, not only served to sustain the hunters and their families, but also many of the employees of the Hudson's Bay Company. The Company purchased great quantities of pemmican or had it made by Indians and half-breeds in its employ. Even the men of the posts and brigades far to the north subsisted largely on pemmican.

Emigrants to the Columbia River Valley

It is recorded that in the year 1841 a party of Red River people, under the guidance of Pierre Dunomais, journeyed from Fort Garry to Fort Carlton, on the first lap of their overland trip to find new homes in the valley of the Columbia River beyond the mountains. Sir George Simpson, Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, with his own party of about eighteen men with thirty-six horses and four carts, followed in their wake shortly after. They caught up with the emigrants about half way between Fort Carlton and Fort Pitt. The following is Simpson's description of the emigrant party (39):

"These emigrants consisted of agriculturists and others, principally natives of Red River settlement. There were twenty-three families, the heads being generally young and active, though a few of them were advanced in life, more particularly one poor woman, upwards of seventy-five years of age, who was tottering after her son to his new home. This venerable wanderer was a native of the Saskatchewan, the name of which, in fact, she bore. She had been absent from this the land of her birth for eighteen years; and, on catching the first glimpse of the river, from the hill near Carlton, she burst, under the influence of old recollections, into a violent flood of tears. During the two days that the party spent at the fort, she scarcely ever left the bank of the stream, appearing to regard it with as much veneration as the Hindoo regards the Ganges.

"As a contrast to this superannuated daughter of the Saskatchewan, the band contained several very young travellers, who had, in fact, made their appearance in this world since the commencement of the journey. Beyond the inevitable detention which seldom exceeded a few hours, these interesting events had never interfered with the progress of the brigade; and both mother and child used to jog on, as if jogging were the condition of human existence.

"Each family had two or three carts, together with a band of horses, cattle, and dogs. The men and lads travelled on the saddle, while the vehicles, which were covered with awnings against the sun and rain, carried the women and children. As they marched in single file, their cavalcade extended above a mile in length; and we increased the length of the column by marching in company. The emigrants were all healthy and happy, living in the greatest abundance and enjoying the journey with the highest relish."

Sir George Simpson

Apparently the party of emigrants had little to follow in the way of a trail from Fort Ellice to Fort Carlton, for Simpson wrote:

"As these people were pursuing the same route as ourselves, and would beat a good track, we resolved, as far as practicable, to follow their trail."

Even at that early date the Simpson party found batteaux at the crossings of the Assiniboine and South Saskatchewan Rivers, in which they



FIG. 7—The Qu'Appelle River. Fording this stream was not an easy matter.

were able to ferry their goods and their persons across those streams, but he speaks of having to ford the Qu'Appelle River (Fig. 7).

Sir George Simpson had an eye for beauty. On several occasions he remarked on the appearance or the perfume of various native flowers such as the "tiger lily" (*Lilium umbellatum* Pursh), the "blue bell" (*Campanula petiolata* A.DC.), and the "rose" (of which we have several native species). He also speaks of the graceful antelopes and the other deer, and of the numerous species of birds seen along the way. He and his party met with a few Indians, on this part of their journey, who either fled from the white men in fright or hung around and pestered them for presents, but they saw no buffalo until after they passed Fort Carlton. At times the mosquitoes attacked both men and horses unmercifully, but on the whole the travelling was pleasant when the weather was fine. At times, when it rained, they suffered great discomfort, as the following passage testifies:

"Next morning we marched till ten o'clock in a soaking rain. An encampment in such weather is by no means an exhilarating sight. On halting we were wet and chilly, but had no place to shelter ourselves from the shower. After a drawn battle of nearly an hour with the wind and rain in the way of making a fire, we at last succeeded; and then heaping on whole piles of wood, we contrived to keep ourselves tolerably comfortable till our tents were pitched. The horses were the very picture of misery, as they huddled themselves together. To all this add

drooping spirits and a murky sky, and you have a pretty correct idea of that kind of picnic breakfast on which the clouds drop their fatness."

Finally, Simpson's party reached Fort Carlton, as described by him in the following words:

"A smart ride of four or five hours from the Bow River (South Saskatchewan), through a country very much resembling an English park, brought us to Fort Carlton, on the Saskatchewan, where we found every soul in the establishment enjoying a siesta with open gates—a conclusive proof of either the carelessness of our people or the peaceful disposition of the neighboring savages. Our day's work had been remarkable, almost to a ludicrous degree, from the number of falls that we encountered, for each of us had a roll or two on the turf, so harmless, however, as not to leave a single bruise to boast of. Besides the exhausted state of our horses, the ground was drilled into a honeycomb by badger holes, which, being pretty well screened by grass at this season of the year, could seldom be discerned soon enough to be avoided.

"At Carlton, we took up our quarters for a couple of nights. We accomplished about six hundred miles in thirteen days—a fair rate of travelling, considering that many of our horses had come the whole distance heavily laden. This fort stands in latitude 53° N.; it is in the form of a lozenge, being surrounded by wooden stockades of considerable height, with bastions at each angle and over the gateway. In the immediate vicinity, there are large gardens and fields, which produce abundance of potatoes and other vegetables; but wheat, though it has sometimes succeeded, has been far more frequently destroyed by the early frosts of autumn, which, even on the Red River, occasionally blight the hopes of the less active among the settlers."

Here we leave Simpson to pursue his romantic journey across the continent and turn to the experiences of others who travelled the trail in later years. There occurs a blank period of about sixteen years between Simpson's account and the next written records of the Carlton Trail. We do not know, for certain, who utilized the trail and marked it more distinctly during this period, but it seems probable that officials of the Hudson's Bay Company used it occasionally. Also, it is likely that buffalo hunters and free traders from the Red River Settlements, followed it to and from the Saskatchewan country.

Paul Kane

We can obtain glimpses of what was going on at Fort Garry and Fort Carlton, a few years after Sir George Simpson's famous journey, from the writings of Paul Kane (15). This remarkable individual came to Canada from Ireland in his boyhood and settled in Toronto. On attaining his manhood he chose art as his vocation. After travelling for some years in the United States and studying in various parts of Europe he returned to Canada and decided to devote his energy and talent to studying and depicting the Indians of Canada and their way of life.

After spending one season on this work in Western Ontario, he journeyed to Fort Garry and across Rupert's Land to the Pacific Coast

and back, with the help of the Hudson's Bay Company. In the course of his long journey, which took him from May, 1846, to October, 1848, he came in contact with many Indian tribes. Besides making dozens of sketches illustrating the leading Indian chiefs, and the costumes, weapons, and activities of their tribesmen, he collected a great deal of information about their customs and brought back many articles of their dress and equipment. Many of these articles and paintings are still preserved in the Royal Ontario Museum.

On the outward journey he went out with a party of half-breed residents of the Red River Settlements and hunted buffalo with them for a time on the plains of the Missouri River region. Then he returned to Fort Garry and travelled by boat to Norway House. From this post he crossed the north end of Lake Winnipeg and ascended the Saskatchewan by York boat to Fort Carlton. He relates an amusing incident which occurred here in September, 1846. It involved the Rev. Robert Rundle, a Wesleyan Methodist missionary after whom Mount Rundle, near Banff, was named:

"Mr. Rundell, a missionary, whose station was at Edmonton, was at Carlton awaiting our arrival, for the purpose of returning in company with us. He had with him a favourite cat which he had brought with him in the canoes from Edmonton, being afraid to leave her behind him, as there was some danger of her being eaten during his absence. This cat was the object of a good deal of amusement amongst the party, of great curiosity amongst the Indians, and a good deal of anxiety and trouble to its kind master.

"Mr. Rowand, myself, and Mr. Rundell, having determined to proceed to Edmonton on horseback, as being the shortest and most agreeable route, we procured horses and a guide, and on the morning of the 12th of September we arose early for our start. The Indians had collected in numbers around the fort to see us off, and shake hands with us, a practice which they seem to have taken a particular fancy for. No sooner had we mounted our rather skittish animals than the Indians crowded around, and Mr. Rundell, who was rather a favourite amongst them, came in for a large share of their attentions, which seemed to be rather annoying to his horse. His cat he had tied to the pommel of his saddle by a string, about four feet long, round her neck, and had her safely, as he thought, concealed in the breast of his capote. She, however, did not relish the plunging of the horse, and made a spring out, utterly astonishing the Indians, who could not conceive where she had come from. The string brought her up against the horse's legs, which she immediately attacked. The horse now became furious, kicking violently, and at last threw Mr. Rundell over his head, but fortunately without much injury. All present were convulsed with laughter, to which the Indians added screeching and yelling as an accompaniment, rendering the whole scene indescribably ludicrous. Puss's life was saved by the string breaking; but we left her behind for the men to bring in the boats, evidently to the regret of her master, notwithstanding the hearty laugh which we had had at his expense."

On his return trip, Paul Kane went down the North Saskatchewan River with a brigade taking the furs out, in the spring of 1848. The brigade, when it left Edmonton, consisted of twenty-three boats and one hundred and thirty men. It was under the command of a Mr. Harriett. Among the others included in the company was Monsig. de Merse, the Catholic Bishop of Vancouver. On their way down from Edmonton they stopped some distance below Fort Pitt to hold a confab with the head men of a huge war party of Blackfeet, Bloods, Sarcees, and Peigans who were on their way to the Carlton district to attack the Crees. Among those of whom Paul Kane made portraits on this occasion, was a group of six chiefs. Two of these fell in the subsequent battle with the Crees.

The remainder of Kane's homeward journey through Rupert's Land passed without any startling incidents, but mention may be made of several matters in connection with it. He states that Bishop de Merse and his party left the brigade at Carlton and journeyed overland to the Red River Settlement. In doing this they doubtless followed the Carlton Trail. Farther down the river at le Pas, Kane met Sir John Richardson and Dr. Rae on their way to the Mackenzie River Delta in search of Sir John Franklin's expedition. Paul Kane parted from the brigade and returned to the East via Lake Winnipeg and the Winnipeg River, so he did not go through Fort Garry on his way home.

Captain Palliser

According to Palliser (37) a large party of emigrants from the Red River went out to the Columbia River Valley under the guidance of James Sinclair in 1855. In 1857 Palliser met a party of them at Fort Ellice, as they were returning to the Red River Settlement. James Sinclair had been killed by the Indians in the mountains. Palliser wrote:

"After this, many of the emigrants became discouraged, the prospects, quality, and extent of the land on the Columbia not being equal to their expectations. The bustling life and active business habits of the Americans with whom they came in contact were too much for them, and finally they determined to set off for Red River again, and had arrived thus far when we saw them. Their party consisted of about seven men, three women, and a few children, one of which had been born on the prairie and seemed to be doing remarkably well."

Captain Palliser was sent out, by the British Government, in charge of a small party of trained men to explore the comparatively unknown south-western portion of Rupert's Land. This consisted mainly of the area between the present international boundary line and the north branch of the Saskatchewan River. He and his party spent much of the summer and fall of 1857-58-59 on this work. As his main object was the exploration of the unknown portions of the country, he did not make extensive use of the Carlton Trail. However, he sent one detachment with supplies for his expedition over it from Fort Garry to Fort Ellice in 1857. He returned over most of it with a small party in the autumn of the same

year. From the Touchwood Hills, however, he took another trail to Fort Pelly, and then came back to the Carlton Trail at Fort Ellice and followed it the rest of the way to Fort Garry. On the trip between Carlton and Touchwood the following entry was made in his diary:

"October 13th—Saddled up and started at sunrise; made twelve miles before breakfast, for which we halted for one hour and a half; made ten miles, halted for dinner for another hour and half; rode fifteen miles further and camped. Country the same as yesterday, rich, rolling, and would have been well wooded but for fires. We discovered near camp the cause of the great fire which had occurred this autumn. It was kindled from the camp-fire of Mons. La Combe, the Roman Catholic missionary to the Crees, on his way to Edmonton; this I learned from a notice planted there, in the shape of a post, on which was carved his initials and the date of the encampment in September."

The following spring Palliser returned from the East and travelled the full length of the Carlton Trail. He left Fort Garry on May 12th and arrived at Carlton on June 5th. After describing the appearance of the country in early spring, and his impressions of its suitability for agricultural purposes, he speaks of his companions who had spent the winter in the Saskatchewan country, and of the work which they had carried on in his absence. He wrote as follows:

"On my arrival at Carlton, I found all the gentlemen under my command in good health. Doctor Hector, who had been in charge of the affairs of the expedition during my absence, had, in accordance with my instructions, hired men and purchased horses for the explorations of the ensuing summer; to carry out these objects it had been necessary for him to visit the Catholic settlement at Lake Ste. Ann's, fifty miles west from Edmonton. He therefore with most praiseworthy energy availed himself of this opportunity to lay down the whole of the North Saskatchewan, and visited Forts Pitt, Edmonton, and Rocky Mountain House, and even penetrated the flanking range of the Rocky Mountains during the winter.

"Lieutenant Blakeston had joined the expedition shortly after my departure from Carlton last October (1857), and I found the magnetic observations under his instructions and conduct ably carried out, assisted by Mr. Sullivan and Mons. Bourgeau.

"The numerous astronomical observations of Mr. Sullivan were all carefully recorded and submitted to me, as well as the computations and the results. Monsieur Bourgeau had already made an extensive collection of early spring plants which grow in this part of the country.

"When I arrived at Red River last November, I made arrangements for engaging men who were to proceed, in the beginning of March 1858, on foot to Carlton; and on my arrival to this place I learned that these men had arrived on the 7th of April, and were afterwards obliged to go out to the south of the Eagle Hills, where they supported themselves by hunting the buffalo, there being no provisions to spare at Carlton."

In the succeeding three years Palliser's expedition worked westward

across the prairies and mountains to the Pacific Coast. They made no further use of the Carlton Trail, except that some of their men from the Red River Settlement returned home over it.

Professor Hind

In the year 1858 Henry Youle Hind, a University of Toronto professor, covered much of Saskatchewan in charge of an exploration party sent out by the Canadian Government. His party crossed southern Manitoba, then turned north-westward to Fort Ellice which it reached on July 9th. Hind (12) wrote,

"Provisions were very scarce at the post, and had it not been for the fortunate arrival of the (fort) hunters with some pemmican and dried meat, we should have been compelled to hunt or kill the ox."

The ox had been brought along as emergency provisions. From Fort Ellice he and his party proceeded up the south side of the Qu'Appelle Valley to the Elbow of the South Saskatchewan River, visiting the mission at Fort Qu'Appelle on the way. On July 30th, at the Elbow, Hind launched a canoe which had been brought by the expedition all the way from the Red River Settlement, and with three companions descended the South Branch of the Saskatchewan to its junction with the North Branch near Fort a la Corne. This was eight years before Nisbet's group founded the Prince Albert Mission. At Fort a la Corne he secured horses and a half-breed helper and a Cree guide and travelled around the west side of the Birch Hills to a point on the Carlton Trail, near the present site of Wakaw, which he reached on August 12th. From this point he followed the Carlton Trail back to Fort Garry. On his way through the Touchwood Hills, Hind wrote a very interesting description of that district and described the location of the first Hudson's Bay post at the Touchwood Hills. At that time it was in charge of a Mr. Hoover. The following is an extract from his journal:

"In the afternoon we began the ascent of a gently rolling slope at the foot of the Touchwood Hills; patches of willow appear here fringing small areas of good pasturage. At 6 p.m. we reached the summit plateau, and then passed through a very beautiful undulating country diversified with many picturesque lakes and aspen groves, possessing land of the best quality, and covered with the most luxuriant herbage. From the west side of the summit plateau, the Quill Lakes are seen to the north-west (actually north-east); these bodies of water have long been celebrated for the large number of goose quills which were occasionally collected there by Indians, and brought to the fort for exportation. There is no timber visible on the west side of the range with the exception of small aspen and burnt willow bushes. All the wild flowers so numerous and beautiful in the valley of Long Creek are met with on the summit plateau of the Touchwood Hills, of even larger growth and in greater profusion. Little prairie openings fringed with aspen occur here and there, through which the trail passes; we then come suddenly on to the banks of a romantic lakelet, in which ducks with their young broods are swimming, and flocks of white cranes* start from their secluded haunts at so unexpected an intrusion. The breadth of this beautiful plateau is about four miles, its

*These birds were Whooping Cranes, now nearly extinct.



FIG. 8—A scene in the Big Touchwoods from the top of what Hind called "Heart Hill", or Ka-ou-ta-at-tin-ak.

level above the Salt Prairie to the west may be about five hundred feet. Our course lay diagonally across it, so that we had to pass through seven miles of this delightful country. The Heart Hill (Fig. 8), with others not seen before, comes into view as we approach the eastern limit and begin a descent to Touchwood Hills Fort. The Last Mountain is visible in the west (actually south-west), but blue in the distance; the Little Touchwood Hills lie before us, the trail to Fort Ellice stretching toward their eastern flank. The country between the two ranges is dotted with lakes and groves of aspen. From a small hill near the fort I counted forty-seven lakes.

"The garden, or rather the remains of a garden in the rear of the fort, produces every variety of vegetable grown in Canada, but the efforts to cultivate it are almost abandoned in consequence of the depredations committed by the Indians from the prairies, when they arrive in autumn with their supplies of provisions (buffalo meat and pemmican). A few of the lakes near the fort are known to contain fish, and it is probable that all the large fresh water lakes contain them. The officer in temporary charge of the post stated that the people here had only known of the existence of white-fish in the Last Mountain Lake (Fig. 9), for three years; they are now taken in the fall, and it is probable that the fishery recently established will become of great importance to this part of the country. The Plain Crees are not fishermen like the Ojibways; they did not know how to catch fish when the attention of the people at the Touchwood Hills Fort was first directed to the treasures of Last Mountain Lake. Mr. Hoover, the officer in charge at the time of my visit, told me that he had first observed the white-fish under the ice in November of 1854, and since



FIG. 9—*Prairie trail and railroad at south end of Last Mountain Lake.*

that period they have established a fishery which provides the fort with an ample supply for winter consumption."

The whole of Hind's report is full of references to buffaloes and Indians (Fig. 10), in the territory over which he travelled. In this respect it is in marked contrast to that of John Macoun who explored the same territory about twenty years later, when the buffaloes were practically extinct and the Indians were cooped up on the newly created Indian reserves.

The Earl of Southesk

In 1859 the Earl of Southesk came to the Hudson's Bay Company's territories for his health and to enjoy the sport of big game hunting. He sailed from Liverpool on April 15th on a paddle-wheel steamer and arrived in New York on April 28th. After visiting Niagara Falls he went to Lachine, on the St. Lawrence River, where he was welcomed by Sir George Simpson. On May 9th he set out in company with the latter and several others for the Red River Settlement. They passed the first night in Toronto where the Earl met the artist, Paul Kane. Simpson's party reached St. Paul on May 13th and Fort Garry on June 1st where they were received with cheering and a cannon salute in honour of the Governor-in-Chief of the Hudson's Bay Company's Territories.

Here the Earl of Southesk spent some time assembling a party of eight men, mostly of Scottish extraction, and a four-wheeled wagon and three new Red River carts, heavily loaded with a variety of equipment and supplies. Being an ardent sportsman this included an extensive collection of the latest guns. Also there were tents, blankets and oil-cloth squares; sugar, flour, tea and rice; biscuits, jam and dried buffalo tongues; and a 90-pound

roll of coarse twist tobacco to give to any Indians they might meet. They had fifteen horses, including two special buffalo runners.

During the course of their travels they followed the Carlton Trail to Fort Ellice, and then departed from it and followed the Qu'Appelle Valley to the Elbow, crossed the South Saskatchewan about forty miles north-west of the Elbow, travelled past the north-east corner of Goose Lake, and hunted buffalo for a time in the Eagle Hill Creek district. Here the Earl's party met a group of buffalo hunters from Fort Carlton. He made a side



FIG. 10—Indian encampment on the open prairie.

trip from their combined camp to the edge of the Missouri Coteau, near the present town of Stranraer, where he shot a grizzly bear. After this they visited Forts Carlton, Pitt, and Edmonton. Then they explored some of the eastern valleys of the Rocky Mountains, going as far south as the Bow River before returning to Edmonton. They had the misfortune to meet with an early winter, so that after boating down stream for a day or so, they were frozen in on October 20th. Obtaining horses at Fort Pitt, they proceeded to Carlton with horse sleds on which to carry their baggage. Leaving Carlton on November 19th they travelled over the Carlton Trail to the Touchwood Hills Post, which they reached on November 28th. Here they branched off on the Fort Pelly Trail. At Fort Pelly they were forced to give up their horses because of the depth of the snow and proceed to Fort Garry by dog train, via the lake posts of western Manitoba, reaching their destination January 8, 1860.

Two extracts from the Earl's book (41) will illustrate the conditions under which they travelled the Carlton Trail. The first was written as they approached the Little Saskatchewan River in Manitoba in the month of

June; the latter describes their crossing of the Quill Plains and their arrival at Touchwood Hills Post about the end of November.

"McKay had spoken much about the dangerous position of our camp, as lying in the direct war-path of the Sioux, so when morning came and it was reported that Black, Morgan, and Vermont were amissing, I feared that they were lost forever. Happily they had only strayed, and not more than an hour was wasted in tracking and recovering the wanderers.

"This was another lovely day, but, for all that, we rejoiced when a thunder-storm came on, for it drove away those pests—the venomous, eye-blinding, hard-skinned little sandflies. Yesterday another enemy had troubled us—certain huge-headed gadflies, of hornet appearance, that are commonly known as 'bull-dogs.' Darting on man and horse, the wretch gives one short bite with his scissory clippers—then off like a flash, leaving a poisoned and bleeding wound.

"The insect tribe is a perfect curse; one has no rest or peace. Mosquitoes on the wet ground and sandflies in the dry; bull-dogs in the sunshine; bugs in the oaklands; ants everywhere—it is maddening. . . . The fever caused by these bites is what most distresses me. It is worst at night, when one gets warm in bed; all the veins swell and glow, and seem full of liquid fire.

"After dinner we were detained till three o'clock by another thunder-storm, and then made a four hour's march through a prairie country with numerous small lakes abounding in ducks. I shot a few, but my sport was much interfered with by a dog we had brought with us—a retriever that would not retrieve.

"This detestable animal, Hector by name, a large, red, curly-coated water spaniel, I had bought rather hastily from a man at Red River, who gave him a high character, but the dog was an imposter and a nuisance. He would go into the water after a dead or wounded duck, secure it zealously, and bring it with him in the most promising style, but on coming near shore he always dropped it just out of your reach, and no persuasion could make him fetch it an inch further. Sometimes he amused himself by running forward and putting everything up. It was hard to say if he were more knave or fool—and the beast was a coward too."

"Sunday, November 27th: Marched for about three hours among brush and poplar clumps, and at noon found ourselves at the edge of a great plain, utterly bare, bounded by a faint blue line of distant wood, amidst which some low hills appeared. McKay and I held a short consultation—whether to camp now, or push on without stopping for dinner, at the risk of having to camp on the open plain, without fuel—and decided on the latter course, as we could not bear losing another day. Accordingly we marched.

"At sunset the woods appeared little nearer than before, but we pressed on till long after dark, hoping to reach some shelter. Suddenly we found ourselves in a swamp, of the kind that never completely freezes (alkali); our horses were plunging about up to their girths in mire; it became impossible to proceed, so we halted where we were and took a hasty supper, consisting of cold pemmican, with water we succeeded in melting from snow by burning wisps of grass. If there had been rushes, we might have

made a hot enough fire to boil our kettle, but with grass this cannot be done.

"The night was not so cold as it often is, and we slept pretty comfortably. The wind was south-west and not high; had a storm arisen, the horses, unable to endure it on so bare a plain, would have run before the wind all night, and we should probably have lost them.

"November 28th: Set off about 8 o'clock, with a bitter cold south-easterly gale right in our faces. We crossed the swamp by going round a little way, and hoped to gain the woods, which seemed about six miles distant, but we were woefully deceived, through the levelness of the snow-covered plain, and it cost us three hours and a half of hard work to get to the first poplar clumps, which are several miles from the real woods themselves. Breakfast and fire, however, were so welcome as to remove all discontented



FIG. 11—*Tracks of a solitary human crossing the park country in winter.*

feelings; and at two o'clock we continued our march, intending to camp about sunset; but, just as we thought of halting, we came upon fresh snow-shoe tracks, from the very direction in which we supposed the fort to lie—so we went on, in the faint hope of getting there that night (Fig. 11).

"The light at this season keeps tolerably good for more than an hour after sunset, and the clearness of the sky enabled us to follow the tracks; it grew very dark at last, and we were preparing to halt, but at that moment heard the barking of dogs, and riding to the brow of the next slope beheld sparks proceeding from a chimney; a welcome illumination, which in a few

minutes guided us to the door of Touchwood Hills Fort—where we were hospitably received by the superintendent, Mr. Taylor. It was a great pleasure to find three newspapers with European news up to the thirtieth of June—the time of the conclusion of the armistice after the battle of Solferino.

“November 29th: A tremendous storm set in, with high north-west wind and heavy snow; we were glad to be safely sheltered in the Fort. It was a rough little settlement, but extremely habitable in its way; the large room in particular with its log-piled hearth directly opposite the door, was the very model of homely comfort and cheerfulness.”

While there, Mr. Taylor told the Earl of Southesk that, according to reports which he had received, the Earl's party barely missed trouble from both Crees and Blackfeet near the Elbow the previous summer, and had been saved by the Indians becoming involved in a skirmish with each other.

Regarding a change of site for the Company's post at the Touchwood Hills the Earl remarked, “I doubt if the fort we then quitted any longer exists, for we heard of an intention to move it the following summer to Little Touchwood Hills . . .” As we know, this intention was carried out when the second Touchwood Hills Post was built about 14 miles south of the first site.

The Overlanders

The lure of gold, to be found in the Caribou district of British Columbia, induced several parties of adventurers from the eastern part of Canada to cross the Prairies from Fort Garry to Fort Edmonton and to go from there over the mountains in the year 1859. It is said that three parties, numbering 60 men in all, followed the Carlton Trail that year, but apparently they left no written records and little is known of their experiences. In 1862, however, they were followed by several parties, among whom were a number who possessed a penchant for keeping diaries (45). Thanks to them we know something definite about the doings of these later overland travellers. In the first party there were about 150 men organized into eight “battilions.” Certain rather interesting rules were adopted as to the duties and conduct of the men. Among other things it was agreed that Thos. McMicking was to be captain of the whole party and that he was to be assisted by a committee composed of one representative from each group. He was to determine the hours of travel, the camping arrangements, and the order of precedence in the line of march, and he was also to direct the guide. The guide was to be their only mouth-piece in case they came into contact with any Indians, and no one was to trade with the Indians for fear of starting disputes with the aborigines. No liquor was to be used among the natives. The men took their turns at cooking, sentry duty, and all other necessary chores.

They started out from Fort Garry on June 5th and on the evening of June 12th camped at Shoal Lake. At this place, according to a diary kept by a Mr. Seller,

“After supper some went fishing, some shooting, while many others were

amusing themselves playing on different kinds of brass instruments, clarinets, flutes, violins, etc., and a concertina, and some two or three groups were gathered together singing over a few favorite pieces of vocal music which wiled away the hours of the evening till bed time."

When they reached the Assiniboine River they found a rude scow on which they ferried all their oxen and carts across the river in small instalments. Thos. McMicking wrote of the factor then in charge of Fort Ellice, "Mr. McKay, the master of the fort is an obliging gentleman, and, in common with the rest of his countrymen, keeps a prudent eye to business and a sharp look-out after the bawbees."

They stayed over Sunday at Fort Ellice and the Rev. Mr. Settee, a native missionary, preached a sermon in the fort which was attended by many of the McMicking party.

Apparently the prospective miners were not all equally adaptable to pioneering activities. Seller's diary contains this entry as evidence of the fact: "There we together split off from the main body and travelled ahead, the cause being the delay of certain parties who know nothing about carts and cattle or anything else save standing and looking at others working, or getting behind a counter, neither of which will be of any benefit to a man when his ox and cart is stuck fast in a mudhole."

It is stated that on June 24th they entered the Touchwood Hills and passed the old deserted fort. This was situated about six miles north and two miles west of the present town of Punnichy. In 1861 a new post had been built about fourteen miles south, near an Indian Mission on the western edge of the Little Touchwood Hills. The Overlanders gathered their first wild strawberries near the deserted post.

After crossing the Quill Plains, they passed through a magnificent country of alternate woodland and prairie where the grass grew luxuriantly in the open spaces. From the number of buffalo bones and old buffalo trails and wallows, which they saw, they concluded that this was one of the favorite hunting grounds of the Indians and Metis.

On June 30th they reached the South Saskatchewan River at Batoche. There they found a large batteau, the property of the Hudson's Bay Company, on which they were able to ferry six carts and their loads at each trip. The cattle and horses were forced into the river and made to swim across it. In the excitement of driving the livestock into the river, one of the men got into deep water and was nearly drowned. Expert swimmers pulled him out of the water and brought him back through the gates of death by means of artificial respiration.

On July 1st they arrived at Fort Carlton, having travelled the five hundred and some odd miles from Fort Garry in twenty-five days. The Fort at that time was in charge of a Mr. Lillie. It is stated that 300 Indian hunters and trappers were attached to this post, largely for the purpose of bringing in pemmican to supply the servants of the Hudson's Bay Company throughout the north country. Here the Overlanders had their first taste of buffalo meat, as they were able to purchase some in the fresh state at the post. They

were very glad of the change and found that the meat resembled beef, but it was a little coarser in the grain and more juicy. The Overlanders wasted no time here but ferried their equipment over the north branch at once and proceeded westward.

Milton and Cheadle

The next characters to roll across our stage were, of all things, tourists! A couple of adventurous Englishmen, Dr. Cheadle and Lord Milton, decided to cross Rupert's Land on horseback just for the interest and excitement of the trip. Accordingly they set out from Fort Garry on August 23rd, 1862, with a travelling companion named Messiter, and several half-breed servants and Red River carts, to carry their "impedimenta." They arrived at Fort Carlton on September 26th, so they did not get over the trail as rapidly as did the Overlanders.

At Fort Ellice, Lord Milton purchased an Indian lodge made of buffalo skins. It was "nicely" painted on the outside with scenes depicting Indian warfare. It was obtained by bartering for it a plated calumet, and a cart cover to protect the Indian's family until he could make a new lodge. The tourists used this skin lodge as a tent throughout much of their subsequent journey.

As they travelled along they shot enough ducks and prairie chickens to supply most of their food.

The following excerpts from Dr. Cheadle's diary (3) mention camping near the site of the first Hudson's Bay post in the Touchwood Hills, and describe their crossing of the South Saskatchewan and their arrival at Fort Carlton:

Thursday, September 18th: "At sundown came upon Touchwood Hills. Old fort; pretty situation, rounded hills, etc. Autumn tints at sunset very fine. Encamp just beyond fort near pretty lake with round wooded island in centre very like a miniature Derwentwater." (Fig. 12.)

Thursday, September 25th: "Through wooded country with numerous lakes and arrive at South Saskatchewan at noon. Camp on bank, dine. After dinner men cut down trees, make raft, and cross for Company's barge; unload carts, and transfer all baggage and selves to the other bank, leaving carts and horses behind to be fetched in the morning. Saskatchewan about eighty yards wide here, muddy stream, wooded banks, muddy and stony at edges. Make Canada fire in road under trees and sleep in open air.

Friday, September 26th: "In early morning carts taken to pieces and brought across in barge. The horses driven in and swam across, causing some trouble and enduring severe lodge-polling before they could be induced to enter the water. I contradict Messiter in the same manner he uses to others, and he becomes very irate. We don't speak for some time. I walk on ten or twelve miles and the carts come up. I get my horse and stay behind to lunch on pemmican with Milton. I find that he and Messiter have had a violent quarrel about nothing and nearly come to blows. We agree that it will be better to separate, as his cross-grained

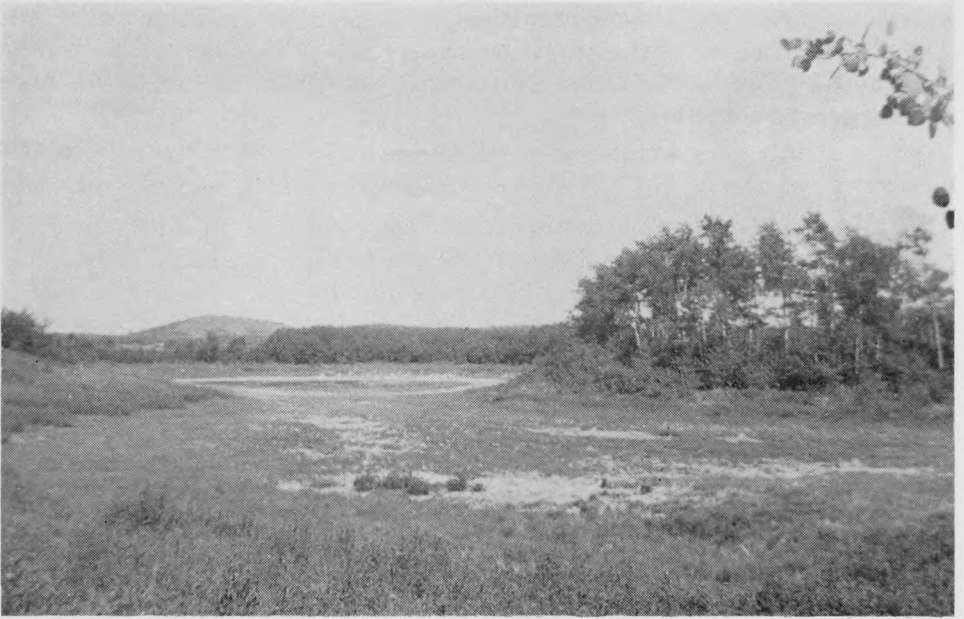


FIG. 12—Doctor Cheadle's "miniature Derwentwater" as it appeared in July, 1949. The "wooded island" is on the right. From all appearances this lakelet was once 15 or 18 feet deep.

temper will be monotonous during six months of winter. Milton does not like to mention it and pities him more than I do; left open. Milton's horse meanwhile breaks away and I lend him mine to go for him; catches him at last, and brings back mine. We canter forward five or six miles and suddenly come into a broad track and after about a half a mile of this see the fort in the valley below close to the river. Carts descending by another route. Find Mr. Lillie at Fort very civil and invites us to tea. Fresh buffalo meat for the first time; steaks very good. Delighted with news that buffalo bulls are within half a day, the cows two days. Resolve to stay next day and Sunday and prepare, commence campaign on Monday. Lodge erected near river close to Fort. No Indians here except few old ones; rest after buffalo. Blackfeet not near except in spring. Snow comes on.

Saturday, September 27th: "Have famous sleep. The Company's jealousy of other traders. Mr. Lillie sends for La Ronde and pumps him about our rum and goods. Snow fallen some four inches during the night and still continues (12 noon). Send to Fort for potatoes, milk and marrow fat, and have famous breakfast. Make what preparations we can but unable to get boxes on account of snow, not daring to uncover the carts. Very slow day. Fort better than Ellis; high pallisade with platform, round and square towers at corners. North Saskatchewan very similar to South. Messiter very agreeable. Snow continued all day; in evening went to Fort and got some sulphur for our itch; bought three pairs moccasins (buffalo) 1s. per pair. Wretched old Cree with liver disease asks for rum; not got any.

Sunday, September 28th: "A very raw cold thaw; cleaned gun, patched bulb, and separated things for this hunt, sending the rest to the Fort until

our return. In afternoon went to the Fort and prepared sulphur ointment. Invited to tea with Mr. Lillie who gave us stewed buffalo steaks; very good indeed. Milton made cartridges in the evening. Delighted with the news that 2 grisly bears were seen about 5 miles from the Fort. Mr. Lillie very kindly promised to keep the man (Peter the interpreter) who had seen them, to take us to the place at daybreak next morning. Peter had discovered the tracks whilst bringing in the horses to the Fort that evening; followed them and discovered two full grown grislys tearing up roots; stated he dismounted, loaded his gun and prepared to shoot at them when he suddenly remembered it was Sunday. La Ronde for some reason or other set himself against hunting the bears, thought he would not find them in the morning, etc., etc.; went to bed rather late, giving instructions to be called at daybreak."

Our ardent hunters were unable to find the grizzly bears, which was perhaps just as well for all concerned, but a few days later they did succeed in finding and shooting buffalo in the district along the Eagle Hill Creek west of where Saskatoon now stands. After that they returned to Carlton and then went out to a point somewhere west of the present site of the town of Leask where they built a log cabin with the help of a half-breed servant. There they spent the winter and during the following spring and summer they proceeded on to Edmonton and over the Rockies to the Pacific Coast in 1863.

The McDougalls—Missionaries to the Indians

We will now turn our attention to two men who settled in the Saskatchewan Country and who by their arduous and faithful labors as Christian missionaries, left an indelible impression on the people and history of this new land. These two were George McDougall and his son John. Coming into the country in 1862, they established a Wesleyan Methodist mission at a point about seventy miles down the North Saskatchewan River from Edmonton. They named this place Victoria. Subsequently they established two other missions, one at Edmonton and another at Morleyville on the Bow River. They travelled far and wide in their attempts to Christianize the Indians and prepare them for the great changes to come when the white people would move in and settle the prairies. They made repeated trips to the buffalo feeding grounds for supplies of meat and took part in many exciting hunts with the half-breeds and Indians. They also made many trips over the Carlton Trail, accounts of which are to be found in the series of books written by John McDougall in later years. The father perished after becoming lost in the Foothill Country in January, 1876. The influence of their teaching helped greatly in keeping many of the Indians from going on the war-path in sympathy with the Metis in 1870 and in 1885.

Coming from Ontario in 1860, the McDougall family spent two years at the Indian mission near Norway House at the north end of Lake Winnipeg. In 1862 John came up the Saskatchewan River with a brigade of York boats bringing supplies to the Hudson's Bay posts along the north branch of that great river. At the same time his father went down to Fort Garry by boat and then came in over the Carlton Trail on horseback. After the

first year or so at the new mission they had to bring in their own supplies, so in the spring of 1864, John was sent to Fort Garry with an Indian helper to bring in the necessary supplies by Red River cart. They travelled in company with several others from another mission. On the way down he and his companions shot several antelope in the Wakaw district and killed a bear in the Touchwood Hills, which, together with game birds and birds' eggs, gave some variety to their diet. They also fell in with a brigade of Metis traders from Lac la Biche, with whom they travelled in friendly company, for a time, before pressing on ahead. We will let John describe his experiences, near Fort Ellice, in his own words (25):

"Continuing our journey, we left these people to come on more slowly. We crossed Pheasant Plains and Cut Arm Creek and camped one evening



FIG. 13—Looking north across the Qu'Appelle Valley at the upper end of Katepwe Lake.

on the high bank of the Qu'Appelle River (Fig. 13), beside a spring. In the evening shade, as we were sitting beside our camp-fire, suddenly I heard a cry which thrilled through my whole being; 'Whip-poor-will-Whip-poor-will!' came echoing through the woods and up the valley, and in a moment I was among the scenes of my childhood paddling a birch canoe along the shores of the Great Lakes, rioting among the beech and maple woods of old Ontario. For years I had not heard the whip-poor-will and now the once familiar sounds brought with them a feeling of homesickness.

"The next afternoon Ka-Kake and I, leaving our companions to cross the Assiniboine above the mouth of the Qu'Appelle, detoured by way of Fort Ellice, and here also I had a memorable experience. Mrs. MacKay, the wife of the gentleman in charge of the fort, very kindly invited me to have

supper with them. As we would have plenty of time to rejoin our party afterwards, I gladly accepted, and what should be on the table but pancakes and maple syrup! I had not even tasted anything cooked from flour for some time. I had not tasted maple syrup for four years and had not had a slice of bread for two years. No wonder I can never forget those cakes and syrup! Verily the memory of them is still sweet to my taste. Not that I am an epicure—by no means—but these were things I had been accustomed to, almost bred on, all my life previous to coming to the North-West.”

A few days later they passed a large band of Metis hunters, from the Red River Settlement, starting out on the summer hunt with about 500 carts. When John and his companion came to the White Mud River they found the Rev. Mr. George in charge of an Anglican mission there. He says, “Mrs. George was very kind, and for the first time in two years I had a square meal of bread and butter. Oh! How good it was.” The next morning, as they started on their way, Mrs. George gave them a fresh loaf and some butter for their noon-day lunch. However, they were barely out of sight of the home of their kind hostess when they dismounted and fell upon the bread and butter and ate them to the last crumb with eager relish!

Arriving at Fort Garry, John secured supplies for the mission and carts and oxen with which to transport the goods. He also bought four milch cows. The oxen cost about thirty-five dollars apiece and the cows cost about half that much. The flour cost about eight dollars per hundred pounds. He also saw “Hudson’s Bay blankets” for the first time. These were large five-shilling and five-pound notes, issued by the Company.

After securing his supplies and visiting some friends he commenced the long return journey with a Mr. Conner and his son for additional company. Space does not permit the inclusion of very much detail concerning their experiences on the way back, but an Indian attempted to steal their horses somewhere in the Humboldt district and John’s account of the affair makes interesting reading.

“I think it was the fourth day afterwards (after meeting Indians in the Touchwood Hills) that we camped in a small round prairie, backed by a range of hills and fringed around by willow and popular bush. We had pulled our carts into a line, with our camp-fire in the middle. We were sufficiently north, as we thought, to be comparatively free from horse-thieves and war parties, so we merely hobbled our horses, and making a good smudge near our own fire, we rolled in our blankets, each man under a cart, except for Mr. Conner who slept in his. Some time in the night I was awakened by my little dog, who had crept under my blanket as usual, and now startled me by springing forth and barking vigorously. As I raised myself on elbow, I saw that the two larger dogs were charging at something quite near. The moon was about three parts full, and the night quiet and almost clear. From under the shadow of the cart I could see our horses feeding near the smoke (of the smudge). Presently I discovered an object crawling up to come between the carts and the horses. At first I thought it was a big grey wolf, but as the dogs rushed at it, I saw that it did not recede, but came on. I reached for my

gun and watched closely, and presently saw the object pick up a stick and throw it at the dogs. This convinced me that it was someone trying to steal our horses. His object evidently was to creep in between us and our stock, and gently driving them away, he would then cut off the hobbles and run them off.

"Having made sure that what I saw was a human being, and a would-be-horse-thief, or worse, I immediately planned to intercept him. So I in turn began to crawl along the shade of the carts until I was under the last one, which was Mr. Conner's. Here I waited and watched until, seeing the fellow repeatedly frighten the dogs away, I was sure it was a man. He was slowly coming up on hands and knees, and was now near the first horse, when I took deliberate aim and fired at him. My gun was loaded with shot and fortunately for him was only a single barrel, or I would have given him the other, for I was not at that moment in a mood to spare a horse-thief. My shot at once knocked him down flat. When the smoke had cleared away I saw him starting to crawl off, so I jumped for him, on which he rose to his feet and ran for all he was worth towards the nearest bush. I dropped my gun and picked up a pole that lay in my way, and was over-taking him fast when he reached the thicket; then thinking he might not be alone, I ran back for my gun. My companions by this time were all up, and we made ready for an attack. Tying up our horses we watched and guarded until daylight, but were not further molested."

One can imagine the fright Mr. Conner got when John's gun went off right under his cart! Horse thieves certainly took their lives in their hands in those days.

On reaching the South Saskatchewan they found the river in full flood and they had a terribly difficult and dangerous task to get their carts and livestock across. Finally they accomplished this without loss of either life or property, but it was "touch and go" for a time. As if this were not trouble enough their horses strayed away shortly after they got over the river. John's feet were badly cut from the labours of ferrying their things over the river but he set out to look for the lost animals and, after hours of painful and painstaking tracking, they were finally found and galloped back to camp in disgrace. The travellers were then able to continue their journey and succeeded in crossing the North Saskatchewan at Carlton the next day with much less anxiety and effort.

The McDougalls made several other trips over the Carlton Trail to secure provisions for their missions, or to bring in relatives and missionary helpers from Eastern Canada. In 1872, father and son travelled down to Winnipeg together to attend a conference of Methodist church and mission officials (28). At this conference John was ordained. While there, they met Sandford Fleming and his party. After the conference was over, George McDougall returned to the Saskatchewan country with the Fleming party. John proceeded to Ontario where he married his second wife. On their arrival at Fort Garry, on the return trip, he was unable to find anyone to make the trip with them to Edmonton because it was so late in the season. So, with his young wife driving a "democrat," and he on horse-



FIG. 14—A minor trail in the park country covered by a blanket of snow in early winter. Trees and shrubs bear a glistening coat of hoar frost.

back driving a cart and several loose horses, they made a lonely trip to Carlton through the snow storms of an early winter (Fig. 14). Among the few people they saw on this 500-mile stretch were a party of Sioux Indians and some Hudson's Bay officials, including Factor McDonald of Fort Qu'Appelle and Factor McMurray, who was then stationed in the Athabaska River country. During the later part of their trip they ran into blizzards and deep snow between Carlton and Victoria but they finally arrived at their destination safely.

A Dog Team On the Carlton Trail

Going back for a moment to March 1867, I should like to mention a trip by dog-team over the Carlton Trail. It was made by a small party of Catholic missionaries and their dog drivers. Father Lacombe came down from the prairies south of Edmonton to meet Bishop Grandin at Carlton (13). The latter was returning from a tour of inspection of the missions to the north-west. On the way from Fort Pitt to Carlton, Father Lacombe was stricken with snow blindness. After a terrible trip, he arrived at Carlton only to find that the Bishop had given up hopes of seeing him and had started on down the Carlton Trail for St. Boniface earlier in the day. However, Father Lacombe was determined not to miss seeing the Bishop, so he immediately started out after him without even stopping to rest his weary dogs (both human and canine) and the hardy priest finally reached the Bishop's camp on the South Saskatchewan River long after midnight. From this camp the Bishop persuaded Father Lacombe to accompany him to St. Boniface, so they started off next morning with the priest tucked away in the cariole and the Bishop running behind on snowshoes. It is recorded that Father Lacombe was so exhausted, from the

exertions of the previous few days, that he fell asleep in the cariole and never awoke until the evening camp was reached. However, by the following morning he was fresh again and ready to change places with the Bishop for the remainder of the journey.

The Rev. James Nisbet

In 1866 the Presbyterian Church established an Indian Mission at a point on the North Saskatchewan River about 60 miles below Fort Carlton (23). The first missionary sent to this place was the Rev. James Nisbet and he called the place Prince Albert in honour of the Prince Consort. This seemed quite fitting, as the Methodist Mission higher up the river near Edmonton was called Victoria.

James Nisbet and his party of helpers, with their wives and several children, came into the Saskatchewan country over the Carlton Trail. Their caravan consisted of eleven carts and a light wagon. They left Kildonan on June 6th, 1866, and reached Carlton about the middle of July. Here he was joined by Mr. George Flett. Leaving most of the party at Carlton for about a week, he and Mr. Flett searched out a suitable site for the new mission and obtained permission from the Cree Indians to occupy it. Then the whole party floated down the river on a raft to their new home in the wilderness.

We have very little first hand information about their trip over the trail from Kildonan to Carlton, but the following is an excerpt from one of James Nisbet's letters:

"All our goods were carried in carts; each cart was drawn by one ox, harnessed something like a horse. Mrs. Nisbet and our little girl and a young woman rode on a light wagon with a canvas top, such as you sometimes use in Canada. For myself, I was generally on horseback but frequently walking, as the oxen do not go very fast. We had tents, such as soldiers use, which we pitched every night, and in them we were generally very comfortable. The Sabbaths were delightful to us. Both men and animals were prepared for the weekly rest. It was pleasant to see the poor oxen evidently enjoying the rich pasture of the wilderness and the rest they had from their daily toil. We had regular Sabbath services, and they were very devout.

"We had a good many creeks and rivers to cross, and I dare say you would have been much amused, had you seen the plans that were fallen upon for crossing such as were too deep for loaded carts. Few of my friends in the east have seen a boat made with two cartwheels tied together and an oilcloth spread over them, or one made of ox-hides sewed together and stretched on a rough frame, that would take two carts and their loads at a time. Such were the contrivances for getting over streams where there are no bridges or large boats by which we could cross. We passed over a great deal of beautiful country, with hills and valleys, streams, lakes and ponds. Hundreds of ducks were swimming about in the little lakes, and sometimes they furnished dinners for us. Sandhill cranes were also seen occasionally, and a few of them

were shot for our Sabbath dinners. Forty days after we left our Red River homes we got to a place called Carlton House, on the north branch of the great Saskatchewan River, and there we camped for one week, while I went to see some places that I could fix upon for our future home."

This was the beginning of the Prince Albert settlement, the first agricultural one in the area now included in the province of Saskatchewan. Pioneer farmers began to occupy the district surrounding the mission about 1873. From that year on, the population of the settlement continued to grow, and increased use was made of the Carlton Trail for the purpose of bringing in new settlers, and for freighting in supplies for those already established there. A new branch of the Trail was made from the west bank of the river at Batoche to the new mission. In later years a different route was developed. This led south and crossed the river near St. Louis and joined the old Trail near Wakaw.

Captain Butler

In the late autumn of 1870, a colorful figure, in the person of Captain W. F. Butler, travelled the Carlton Trail on a peculiar mission. Captain Butler had come out from England as a free lance to have a part in suppressing the Red River Rebellion. In October he left Fort Garry with a Hudson's Bay Company's officer and a French half-breed as companions. He was commissioned by Governor Archibald to confer the office of "justice of the peace" upon two residents of the Saskatchewan country and also to take supplies of smallpox vaccine and instructions, relating to smallpox and its control, to any Hudson's Bay factors and missionaries that he could visit. The reason for this latter assignment was the terrible epidemic which had swept the Saskatchewan region the previous summer. He was also to bring back a report as to the condition of the various Indian tribes and small settlements of whites and Metis, as intercourse between them and the Red River Settlement had been forbidden during the epidemic.

Captain Butler's party left Fort Garry on October 24th and arrived at Fort Carlton on November 8th. The only record we have of a faster trip over the Trail is that of Sir George Simpson and his party, in 1841. Butler and his companions had a Red River cart, a buckboard, and seven horses. Here are a few extracts from his story of the trip (2):

"The days that now commenced to pass were filled from dawn to dark with unceasing travel; clear, bright days of mellow sunshine followed by nights of sharp frost which almost imperceptibly made stronger the icy covering of the pools and carried farther and farther out into the running streams the edging of ice which so soon was destined to cover completely the river and the rill. Our route lay along the left bank of the Assiniboine, but at a considerable distance from the river, whose winding course could be marked at times by the dark oak woods that fringed it. Far away to the south rose the outline of the Blue Hills of

the Souris, and to the north the Riding Mountains lay faintly upon the horizon."

As they approached Fort Ellice they passed a Metis trader, with a number of horses hauling carts filled with merchandise, on his way to the Missouri Coteau to trade with the Sioux. To quote again, Butler wrote:

"I remained only long enough at Fort Ellice to complete a few changes in costume which the rapidly increasing cold made necessary. Boots and hat were finally discarded, the stirrup-irons were rolled in strips of buffalo skin, the large moose-skin 'mittaines' taken into wear, and immense moccasins got ready. These precautions were necessary, for before us there now lay a great open region with treeless expanses that were sixty miles across them—a vast tract of rolling hill and plain over which, for three hundred miles, there lay no fort or house of any kind.

"About midway between Fort Ellice and Carlton a sudden well-defined change occurs in the character of the country; the light soil disappears, and its place is succeeded by a rich dark loam covered deep in grass and vetches. Beautiful hills swell in slopes more or less abrupt on all sides, while lakes fringed with thickets and clumps of good-sized poplar balsam lie lapped in their fertile hollows.

"This region bears the name of the Touchwood Hills. Around it, far into endless space, stretch immense plains of bare and scanty vegetation, plains seared with the tracks of countless buffalo which, until a few years ago, were wont to roam in vast herds between the Assiniboine and the Saskatchewan. Upon whatever side the eye turns when crossing these great expanses the same wrecks of the monarch of the prairie lie thickly strewn over the surface. Hundreds of thousands of skeletons dot the short, scant grass; and when fire has laid barer still the level surface, the bleached ribs and skulls of long-killed bison whiten far and near the dark burnt prairie. There is something unspeakably melancholy in the aspect of this portion of the North-West."

They were forced to make one of their camps in the middle of the Quill Plains beside a small willow bluff. During the night a snowstorm came on and the Hudson's Bay man came near being lost the next morning while hunting their horses, which had strayed away from the camp in the storm. On the night of November 6th they camped near the Minitchinass (Solitary Hill), about sixteen miles south-east of Batoche. This corresponds to Hind's "Lumpy Hill of the Woods."

Arriving at the river they found it frozen over except for an open channel down the middle. Being nearly out of provisions and anxious to reach Carlton, they attempted to cross by putting an oilcloth around their light wagon box and sliding it out to thin ice and chopping a channel for it from thence to the open water. However, the oilcloth leaked and it was difficult to cut their way in to solid ice on the far side of the open water and finally the long leather tow-rope broke, so they hadn't made much progress when the second night fell. The third day they found the river frozen right across and, after testing it cautiously, they led the first horse across safely. At the next trip, however, Captain Butler's favorite horse, "Blackie," broke through into deep water and had to be shot to put

him out of misery, as they could not rescue him. This broke Captain Butler's heart, and he sat down and cried like a child, for he was strongly attached to the faithful animal.

Giving up the attempt to cross the rest of the horses until the ice became stronger, he and the Hudson's Bay man took the one horse and journeyed on to Carlton, leaving a half-breed to guard the others.

"From the high north bank I took one last look back at the South Saskatchewan—it lay in its broad deep valley glittering in one great band of purest snow; but I loathed the sight of it, while the small round hole, dwarfed to a speck by distance, marked the spot where my poor horse had found his grave, after having carried me so faithfully through the long lonely wilds."

On arriving at Carlton they learned that the smallpox epidemic was over, but before it ran its course thirty-two out of about sixty who lived around the place had died! The list of dead included the former officer in charge of the fort. To add to the depression which had settled about the fort, provisions were scarce because of the difficulty of reaching the buffalo which were far out on the plains.

After leaving Carlton, Captain Butler visited a number of posts and Indian camps to the west, including Battleford, Pitt, Edmonton, and Rocky Mountain House. He reached the last named place early in December and spent eight days there, part of the time in the company of Father Lacombe. He commenced his return on December the twelfth and reached Victoria on the twenty-second. Here he spent Christmas. He stopped for some time at Fort Pitt to obtain fresh dogs, as he was travelling now by dog team. He returned to Carlton on January twelfth and that night the temperature went down to -20° F. in his bedroom at the fort—outside it was about fifty degrees below zero.

Instead of returning to Fort Garry across the prairies, he followed the Saskatchewan River and Lakes Winnipegosis and Manitoba. Therefore we will say no more of his experiences but turn to others who used the Carlton Trail in subsequent years.

Sandford Fleming

Sandford Fleming was engineer-in-charge of the projected Canadian Pacific Railway, and he crossed the continent in the summer of 1872 to see the country over which the railway was to be built. He had with him the Rev. George M. Grant, as his secretary, and John Macoun as botanist of the expedition, and three other men besides the guide and helpers necessary to look after the carts, buckboards, and horses. Incidentally, this is one of the first references to a buckboard being used on the Carlton Trail, although Captain Butler and the McDougalls had already used this type of vehicle. Mr. Grant kept a diary of the long journey and we will draw on it for pictures of their experiences (9).

"Our first evening on the prairie was like many another which followed it. The sky was a clear, soft, unflecked blue, save all around the horizon,

where pure white clouds of many shapes and masses bordered it, like a great shield of which only the rim is embossed. The air was singularly exhilarating, yet sweet and warm, as in more southern latitudes. The road was only the trail made by the ordinary traffic, but it formed nevertheless an excellent carriage road. Far away stretched the level prairie, dotted with islets of aspens; and the sun, in his going down, dipped beneath it as he does beneath the sea. Soon after sunset, we reached our camping place for the night, an open spot on the banks of the river thirty-three miles from Fort Garry, on the east side of Long Lake, with plenty of dry wood for our fires, and good feed for the horses near at hand. Scarcely were our fires lighted when another traveller drove up, the Rev. Mr. McDougall, Wesleyan missionary at Fort Victoria near Edmonton. We cordially welcomed him to our camp, and asked him to join our party. He was well known to us by reputation as a faithful minister, and an intelligent observer of Indian character. He had been nine times over the plains, and evidently knew the country better than our guides. On this occasion, he was accompanied only by his Cree servant Souzie, which being interpreted is Joseph . . .”

“At four p.m. we started for the next post, Rat Creek, ten miles off. The sky was threatening, but, as we always disregarded appearances, no one proposed a halt. On the open prairie, when just well away from the Hudson Bay Company’s store, we saw that we were in for a storm. Every form of beauty was combined in the sky at this time. To the south it was such blue as Titian loved to paint; blue, that those who have seen only dull English skies say is nowhere to be seen but on canvas or in heaven; and the blue was bordered to the west with vast billowy mountains of the fleeci-est white. Next to these and right ahead of us and overhead, was a swollen black cloud, along the under surface of which greyer masses were eddying at a terrific rate. Extending from this, and all around the north and east, the expanse was a dun-colored mass livid with lightning, and there, to the right, and behind us, torrents of rain were pouring, and nearing us every minute. The atmosphere was charged with electricity on all sides, lightning rushed towards the earth in straight and zig-zag currents, and the thunder varied from the sharp rattle of musketry to the roar of artillery; still there was no rain and but little wind. We pressed on for a house, not far away; but there was to be no escape. With the suddenness of a tornado the wind struck us, at first without rain—but so fierce that the horses were forced again and again off the track. And now, with the wind came the rain—thick and furious, and then hail—hail mixed with angular lumps of ice from half an inch to an inch across, a blow on the head from one of which was stunning. Our long line of horses and carts was broken. Some of the poor creatures clung to the road, fighting desperately; others were driven into the prairie and, turning their backs to the storm, stood still or moved sideways with cowering heads, their manes and long tails floating wildly like those of the Highland shelties. It was a picture for Rosa Bonheur; the storm driving over the vast prairie, and the men and horses yielding to or fighting against it. In half an hour we got under the shelter of the log house a mile distant; but the fury of the storm was past, and in less than an hour the sun burst forth again,



FIG. 15—Lakelet, with steep wooded shores, in the district east of Cudworth through which the Carlton Trail passed.

scattering the clouds, till not a blot was left in the sky, save fragments of the mist to the south and east. . . .”

“At four p.m., we prepared to follow our party, but at this moment a body of sixty or eighty Sioux, noble looking fellows, came sweeping across the prairie in all the glory of paint, feathers, and Indian warlike magnificence. They had come from Fort Ellice, had recently travelled the long road from the Missouri, and were now on their way to Governor Archibald to ask permission to live under the British flag, and that small reserves or allotments of land should be allowed them, as they were determined to live no longer under the rule of ‘the long knives.’ Some of them rode horses, others were in light baggage-carts or on foot. All had guns and adornment of one kind or another. A handsome brave came first, with a painted tin horse a foot long hanging from his neck down on his naked brawny breast, skunk fur around his ankles, hawk’s feathers on his head, and a great bunch of sweet-smelling lilac bergamot flowers on one arm. An Indian brave has the vanity of a child. We went forward to address him, when he pointed to another as O-ghe-ma (or chief); and, as the band halted, the O-ghe-ma then came up with the usual ‘Ho, Ho; B’jou, B’jou,’ and shook hands all around with a dignity of manner that whites in the new world must despair of ever attaining. His distinction was a necklace of bears’ claws, and moccasins belted with broad stripes of porcupines’ quills dyed a bright gold. Next to him came the medicine man, six feet three inches in height, gaunt and wasted in appearance, with only a single blanket to cover his nakedness. They would have liked a long pow wow, but we had time only for hasty greetings and a few kindly words with them . . .”

August 7th—“Made a good day’s journey of forty-five miles, from the Salt Lake to the junction of the Qu’Appelle and Assiniboine Rivers.

The first stage was ten miles, to the Shoal Lake—a large and beautiful sheet of water with pebbly or sandy beach—a capital place for a halt or for camping. The great requirements of such spots are wood, water, and feed for the horses; the traveller has to make his stages square with the absence or presence of these essentials. If he can get a hilly spot where there are few mosquitoes, and a sheet of water large enough to bathe in (Fig. 15) and a resort of game, so much the better. Arrived at the ground, the grassiest and most level spots, gently sloping, if possible, that the head may be higher than the feet, are selected. The tents are pitched over these, one tent being allotted to two persons, when comfort is desirable, though sometimes a dozen crowd inside of one. A waterproof is spread on the ground, and, over that, a blanket. Each man has another blanket to pull over him, and he may be sound asleep within minutes after arriving at the ground, if he has not to cook or wait for his supper. The horses need very little attention; the harness is taken off and they are turned loose—the leaders or most turbulent ones being hobbled, i.e., their fore feet are fettered with intertwined folds of shagannappi or raw buffalo hide, so that they can only move about by a succession of short jumps. Hobbling is the western substitute for tethering. They find out, or are driven to water, and, immediately after drinking begin grazing around; next morning they are ready for the road . . .”

August 8th—“Being in the neighborhood of a fort, and having to rearrange luggage and look after the new horses, we did not get away till nine o'clock. An hour before, greatly to the surprise of Emilien, who had calculated on keeping in advance the twenty-two miles he had gained on Sunday, and greatly to our delight, Mr. McDougall drove up and rejoined us with his man Souzie. Souzie had never been east before, and the glories of Winnipeg had fairly dazzled him. He was going home heavy laden with wonderful stories of all he had seen—the crowd hearing Mr. Punshon preach and the collection taken up at the close, the review of the battalion of militia, the splendour of the village stores, the Red River steamboat, the quantities of rum, were all amazing. When the plate came around at the church Souzie rejoiced, and was going to help himself, but noticing his neighbors put money in, he was so puzzled that he let it pass . . .”

“Our next stage was twenty-two miles to Broken Arm River—a pretty little stream with the usual deep and broad valley. The soil improved as we travelled west. The grass was richer, and much of the flora that had disappeared for the previous twenty miles began to show again. On the banks of the river there was time before tea to indulge in a great feast of raspberries, as we camped early this evening, after having travelled only thirty-one miles. The botanist, John Macoun, had found exactly that number of new species—the largest number by far on any one day since leaving Fort Garry. The explanation is, that he had botanized over the valleys of two rivers and several varieties of soil. . . .”

“The low line of the Touchwood Hills had been visible in the forenoon (Fig. 16), and, for the rest of the day's journey, we first skirted them in a north-westerly direction and then turning directly west, we gained the height by a road so winding and an ascent so easy, that there was no



FIG. 16—A view of the country-side east of the Little Touchwood Hills as seen from a point about seven miles south of Lestock. "The low line of the Touchwood Hills" shows very faintly in the centre of the picture.

point at which we could look back and get an extended view of the ground travelled in the course of the afternoon. It is almost inaccurate to call this section of country by the name of "Hills," little or big. It is simply a series of prairie uplands, from fifty to eighty miles wide, that swell up in beautiful undulations from the level prairies on each side. They have no decided summits from which the ascent and the plain beyond can be seen; but everywhere are grassy or wooded rounded knolls, enclosing fields with small ponds in the windings, and larger ones in the lowest hollows. The land everywhere is of the richest loam. Every acre that we saw might be ploughed. Though not as well suited for steam ploughs as the open prairie, in many respects this section is better adapted for farming purposes, being well wooded, well watered, and with excellent natural drainage, not to speak of its wonderful beauty. All that it lacks is a murmuring brook or brawling burn; but there is not one, partly because the trail is along the watershed. On a parallel road farther north passing by Quill Lake, Mr. McDougall says that there are running streams, and that the country is, of course, all the more beautiful . . ."

August 14th—"Our first 'spell' today was fifteen, and our second twenty miles, to 'the Round Hill,'* over rolling or slightly broken prairie; the loam was not so rich as usual and had a sandy subsoil. Ridges and hillocks of gravel intersected or broke the general level, so that, should the railway come in this direction, abundant material for ballasting can be promised. . . ."

"The hill at the foot of which we camped rose abruptly from the rest,

* This is now called Mount Carmel.

like the site of an ancient fortalice. Horetski described it as a New Zealand pah; one hill, like a wall, enclosing another in its centre, and a deep precipitous valley that would have served admirably as a moat, filled with thick wood and underbrush, between the two. Climbing to the summit of the central hill, we found ourselves in the middle of a circle, thirty to forty miles in diameter, enclosing about a thousand square miles of beautiful country. North and east it was undulating, studded with aspen groves and shining with lakes (Fig. 17). To the



FIG. 17—Large slough with low marshy shore in the Humboldt district. Note the native vegetation. A tall sedge, *Scirpus validus*, grows at the edge of the open water.

south and west was a level prairie, with a skyline of hills to the south-west. To the north-west—our direction—a prairie fire, kindled probably by embers that had been left carelessly behind at a camp, partly hid the view. Masses of fiery smoke rose from the burning grass and willows, and if there had been a strong wind, or the grass less green and damp, the beauty of much of the fair scene we were gazing on would soon have vanished, and a vast blackened surface alone been left”

August 15th—“We met or passed a great many teams and brigades today; traders going west, and half-breeds returning east with carts well laden with buffalo skins and dried meat (Fig. 18). A number of Red River people club together in the spring, and go west to hunt buffalo. Their united caravan is popularly called a brigade, and very picturesque is its appearance on the road or round the campfire. The old men, the women, and little children are engaged in the expedition, and all help. The men ride (horseback) and the women drive the carts. The children make the fires and do chores for the women. The men shoot buffalo; the women dry the meat and make it into pemmican”

“The sun set when we were still five miles from the river. Another axle had broken and heavy clouds threatened instant rain. Some advised



FIG. 18—*A small party of half-breeds camped on the open prairie.*

halting; but the desire to see the Saskatchewan was too strong to be resisted, and we pushed on at a rattling rate over the ratty uneven road. Never were buckboards tested more severely and no carts but those of the Red River could have stood for ten minutes the bumps from hillock to hillock, over boulders, roots and holes, as we dashed forward at a breakneck rate (probably six or seven miles an hour!). The last mile was downhill. The doctor and the chief put their horses to the gallop, and only drew rein when, right beneath, they saw the shining waters of the river. The rest of us were scarcely a minute behind, and three rousing cheers sent back the news to the carts. In twelve working days we had travelled five hundred and six miles, doing on this last, forty-six; and the horses looked as fresh as at the beginning of the journey; a fact that establishes the nutritious properties of the grasses, their only food on the way, as well as the strength and hardihood of the breed."

The next day Fleming and his party crossed the South Saskatchewan and pushed on to Fort Carlton, where they were hospitably welcomed by Mr. Clark, the factor in charge there at that time. We will leave them here to continue their journey westward and turn to the experiences of another C.P.R. party.

E. W. Jarvis

In the late autumn of 1874 E. W. Jarvis was selected to make a winter exploration of the Smoky River Pass for the Canadian Pacific Railway Company. He had two white men and six Indians to assist him. They travelled on foot and had their supplies drawn by dog teams. As they travelled, Jarvis or his chief assistant would follow the rear sled making a "track survey," i.e., measuring the distance by pacing, forty paces on the

average being considered equal to one chain. After much strenuous travelling and the endurance of intense cold and short rations they reached Edmonton early in April. Taking charge of a packet of mail for Fort Garry they left Edmonton April 7th and proceeded to Fort Pitt with saddle and pack horses. At Fort Pitt they secured Red River carts but the snow banks were still deep in places and they had to break a path to let the carts through the snow for long stretches at a time. It froze so hard on certain nights, however, that the crust on the snow bore the weight of carts and horses for many miles as they approached Fort Carlton, which they reached on April 29th. Here they were hospitably treated by the factor, Mr. Clark. At this place they were told that when the ice broke up the water had risen to a very high level with great rapidity and had carried off the scow used as a ferry. Also it trapped a dozen Indians who were making maple sugar on an island twenty-five miles down river, and although they succeeded in climbing trees above the flood, they could not be rescued and all perished by falling into the river as they became numbed with the cold.

Having secured fresh horses and bought some barley from the Prince Albert settlement, on which to help feed the horses, they started out for Fort Garry by the Carlton Trail. The following is Mr. Jarvis' account of their trip (14):

"On the morning of May 5th we climbed the hill behind the Fort and set our faces towards the rising sun. The snow was nearly all gone, and we easily avoided the few remaining drifts. We reached the South Branch of the Saskatchewan the same afternoon, and spent from three to four hours making two trips across with the scow, as a strong south-west wind (down river) necessitated the hauling of the scow a long way up on our side to ensure making a good landing on the other side. At the French half-breed settlement here the people were driven out of their houses by the rising waters, which seem to have been higher this spring than for many years past. The grass having been all burnt off last autumn, gives the country a cheerless aspect; and we had to go to the margins of lakes or swamps to find any feed at all for the horses; but they, pushing on at the rate of thirty miles a day, with the characteristic endurance of Indian ponies, did not seem to feel the hardships of the trip as much as we had expected.

"About forty-five miles from the South Branch we passed the 'Spathanaw' or Round Hill, a conspicuous feature in the landscape, with a wooden crucifix on the summit said to have been placed there by a worthy Bishop who spent Sunday at its foot. Not far from here, a road branches off to the south-west, crossing the South Branch above where we did, and here we met the first appearance of civilized usages—a finger post with the following inscription:

Gabriel's crossing	{	Cart.....1s. 6d.
		Waggon....2 0
		Horses.....6
Traverse de Gabriel Dumont.		

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"The latter statement was especially interesting; but we took it for granted that those for whom it is intended can make more out of it than we could; so we went our way and reached Touchwood Hill Post on the evening of the 9th. Here were left one of the hired horses, and as the others were already showing decided symptoms of 'giving out' we had to continue the journey on foot, without even the occasional rest of a mile or two in the saddle, the animals having to be spared for use in the carts. But, wearing only moccasins, we found the unaccustomed exercise beginning to tell upon us at the end of a hundred miles, and by the time we had accomplished fifty more, were so footsore that we were quite ready to avail ourselves of a seat in a cart for half an hour when the half-starved horse seemed in a livelier mood than usual. A couple of days above Fort Ellice, we met two travellers, by name of Livingstone and Fraser, footing their way towards the mountains, thence intending to strike for the Cariboo mines. They jogged along in primitive style, unencumbered by either blanket or provisions, carrying only a spare shirt, a gun and some ammunition. To save the necessity for a blanket, and also to avoid the heat, they slept by day and marched by night. On the evening of the fourteenth we encamped at the mouth of the Qu'Appelle River, and crossed over to Fort Ellice early next morning; ten days making the three hundred and sixteen miles from Carlton. Here we received every kind of assistance from Mr. McDonald, the gentleman in charge, who, having no available horses of his own, endeavoured to replenish our scanty stock by hiring and purchasing for us from others. We made but a short halt, crossing the Assiniboine on the scow after dinner—the bridge having been carried away by the freshet—and pushed on a dozen miles to the east over a very good road. In saying goodbye to Mr. McDonald, we parted with regret with the last of a number of gentlemen, officers of the Hon. Hudson's Bay Company, who have shown us every kindness and extended a ready hospitality on every occasion we have come in contact with them. To most if not all of them, we were personally unknown; but it was sufficient to say we were in need of help, to ensure at once their best endeavours on our behalf.

"We were delayed until ten o'clock next morning, as our horses had seen fit to rejoin their companions near the Fort, but we got past Shoal Lake before camping time. In crossing the little Saskatchewan River we had a good deal of trouble, the water was very swift and high, being above the horses' backs. The load had to be piled on an improvised rack on top of the cart body, and by an ingenious combination of tow lines, the horse swimming and the cart afloat, they were safely piloted across. This was our last excitement, except the breaking of an axle against a stump a few miles farther on, and we soon reached the flourishing settlement at the third, second, and first crossings of the White Mud River, where the farmers were busy with their spring occupations, but not over-sanguine of success, owing to the annual scourge of grasshoppers, which has hitherto turned this fruitful colony into a barren waste.

"Passing Portage la Prairie on the 19th, we reached Winnipeg on the 21st of May, having been five and a half months on our trip. At White Horse Plains we met a gay cavalcade going westward; it consisted of Mr. McLeod and his two survey parties, just starting for Edmonton and



FIG. 19—Dysart, Sask., a thriving town now standing in one of the districts explored by Macoun in 1879.

the Rocky Mountains, and their shining boots, glittering spurs and well-groomed horses contrasted with our battered and weather-worn appearance. But we could afford to suffer by the comparison; they would soon be as ragged as we were, and all their troubles were before them, while we were just reaching the goal, pushed forward to over many a weary mile of mountain and plain, and could take our well-earned repose in the happy consciousness of having fulfilled the task allotted to us, and earned the approbation of him we are proud to acknowledge our chief."

John Macoun

One of the most interesting characters who ever travelled the Carlton Trail was John Macoun, an early prophet of Western Canada's greatness as an agricultural land. Quite by chance he was picked up by Sandford Fleming and brought along as botanist to his party in 1872. After following the Carlton Trail from Fort Garry to Carlton they continued on to Edmonton, where the party divided. Horetsky and Macoun were detailed to go to the Peace River country and pass through the mountains to Fort McLeod and then proceed from that place on to the coast. They left Edmonton early in September and followed the route prescribed but parted company at Fort St. James. Macoun proceeded on to the Fraser River and down to the Coast and over to Victoria, where he spent Christmas. Continuing on to San Francisco by boat and to Chicago via the Union Pacific Railway he finally reached Ontario early in the new year. After writing a report of his journey for the authorities at Ottawa he returned to his position as teacher of natural history in Albert College, Belleville, Ontario.

In the spring of 1875 Macoun again went West, this time under the

direction of Dr. Selwyn. He travelled by way of California to Victoria, where his duties began. Regarding these he says (19):

"I had been appointed botanist to the party with instructions to make note on all the country passed through, in regard to the flora, the climate, and agricultural capabilities. This I performed to the best of my ability from Victoria to Peace River Pass, and the whole length of the Peace River, and nearly one thousand miles more before I reached Fort Carlton on the prairie."

Pressing on over the Carlton Trail he reached Winnipeg on November 3rd and arrived back in the East on November 13th, 1875.

Four years later Macoun again went West to lead a small exploring party over some of the more open country in the Northwest Territories (Fig. 19). He reached Winnipeg about the middle of May and took a river steamboat up to Fort Ellice with his men and supplies. After leaving the Hudson's Bay Post his party followed the Carlton Trail for a few days and then struck across the trackless prairie to the Elbow of the South Saskatchewan River via the north end of Last Mountain Lake. At the Elbow they crossed the river and travelled to the Hand Hills and on to Calgary before returning home via Battleford and Winnipeg.



FIG. 20—One of the posts that were used by the North West Mounted Police shortly after they were established in the North West Territories.

The following year, 1880, he led a party to the Moose Mountains, then across the Souris Plains to the present site of Moose Jaw, then on to Old Wives Lakes and the Cypress Hills. There he visited the Mounted Police post, known as Fort Walsh (Fig. 20), and was advised to keep his horses with those of the Mounted Police, during his visit, to prevent the Indians from stealing them. Turning north-east at this point he travelled



FIG. 21—Fields of ripe golden wheat in the "park country."

past the Elbow of the South Saskatchewan nearly to Humboldt before returning to Winnipeg by way of the Anglican Mission on the Gordon Indian Reserve and Fort Ellice.

In 1881 Macoun made his last expedition for the purpose of spying out the land. That summer he and his little party struggled through the lake and bush country of what is now Western Manitoba and Eastern Saskatchewan. They travelled largely by boat and ascended the Red Deer River for some distance and then crossed over to the headwaters of the Swan River and descended it to Livingstone, which was then a post of the North West Mounted Police with Inspector Griesbach in charge. From here they travelled across country to Fort Pelly and then continued by boat down the Assiniboine to Fort Ellice. Then they proceeded to Brandon on foot with the aid of a half-breed to guide them and a cart to carry their luggage. One day's travel brought them to the advance construction gang at work on the new transcontinental railway, and three days' travel brought them to the new town of Brandon, where they were able to take a train for the East. After each trip he wrote a full report of the country examined (18, 19, 20). All his reports spoke in enthusiastic terms of the boundless possibilities for agricultural development (Fig. 21) in the vast new land.

John Macoun was now given a permanent position with the government. His future work consisted mainly of collecting and arranging, in a museum of natural history, plant and bird collections from all over Canada. Thus in later years he was able, on some of his collecting trips, to revisit the prairies and see the fulfilment of his early prophesies and dreams in the marvellous agricultural progress which took place in Western Canada

between 1880 and 1910. Before turning to other men connected with the history of the Carlton Trail let us examine a few excerpts from Macoun's own writings.

The first three have to do with his journey over the Carlton Trail in the summer of 1872 in company with Sandford Fleming.

"I may as well mention now our mode of travel. Our caravan consisted of six Red River carts and two buckboards which had been bought at St. Paul. The carts were all of wood and no iron in them at all. From this time forward, the chief decided that we would make three spells a day and must make at least forty miles each day for the next month. We had attached to one of the carts an odometer, which gave the number of revolutions of the wheel, and from that was measured the distance travelled on each spell. By such means, we knew without any difficulty how many miles we had travelled. The cavalcade was arranged so that one buckboard went in front and then the six carts one after the other. My buckboard was the last of all. We had over forty horses and, as we were going so fast most of the time, they were changed three times a day. This was our regular mode of travelling for the whole trip. We would rise at sunrise and have some breakfast; take a second breakfast after going about ten to fifteen miles; then take our mid-day spell of the same distance and, after dinner, take another spell and camp early in the evening. As we were passing over the whole distance through the 'fertile belt,' we were seldom on a very extensive prairie so that we had feed, wood, and water most of the time."

The next passages show why Grant, in "Ocean to Ocean," always referred to John Macoun as "the Botanist." It describes a district in Manitoba where the trail rises from the first to the second prairie steppe.

"For eight miles the trail led through a rich country, vegetation of every kind most luxuriant. The whole of this region was evidently covered with forest at no distant date, as there were still oaks and many aspens remaining. Fires were gradually denuding the whole country of wood, as the margins of all groves show the action of fires. Passing out of this we came to a region of sand dunes. Here we observed the first coniferous trees seen since leaving Oak Point. White spruce (*Abies alba*), common juniper (*Juniperus communis*) and the creeping variety *J. Sabina* var. *procumbens* were abundant, and underneath their shade grew many of the flowers of the pine woods of Canada. Pine Creek, a small stream, winds amongst those hills which stretch for about four miles on either side of the stream. Gradually the hills melt into the plain, and a wide dry prairie extending for miles spreads out before us. The soil is well suited for cultivation, but wood is very scarce. About the centre of this prairie we crossed Boggy Creek (Whitemud River), and six miles beyond came to a gravelly tract thickly strewn with boulders. For twenty-one miles the surface of the country is much diversified by ponds, lakelets, small groves of aspen, and thickets of willows, with broad, dry expanses of prairie, covered with grass and flowers. Since we struck the hill, we have been gradually rising higher and higher, and the vegetation shows a drier climate. We are now on the banks of the Little Saskatchewan (Minnedosa River), which runs in a valley about 200 feet deep: evidently

scooped out of the drift by its own water. The leading characteristics of the vegetation remain unbroken. On low spots sedge grass (*Carex*) mixed with wheat grass (*Triticum*), cord grass (*Spartina*), and various species of blue joint (*Calamagrostis*). On the dry grounds the grasses are various species of *Vilfa*, *Sporobolus*, and *Stipa*, with a few others in less abundance. The chief flowering plants are wild bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa*), various sunflowers (*Helianthus*), Cone flowers (*Rudbeckia*), Golden Rods (*Solidago*), and a multitude of Asters, *Petalostemons*, *Lupinus*, *Oxytropus*, *Hedysarum*, and many fine species of *Astragalus* with other Leguminous and Rosaceous plants. The valley of the river is very beautiful and formed a pleasing contrast to the monotonous country passed over before reaching it. The timber on its banks is nearly all destroyed by the recklessness of travellers. In a few years there will not be a tree left in the country. From the river, the country still kept ascending, ridge after ridge coming into view until at last we reached the level of the steppe. Before reaching this the vegetation showed a considerable retardation, owing to the want of heat and moisture; except this, there was no change. We camped for the night at the Salt Lakes, which are in a slight depression, off the general level of the plateau. The shores of the lakes produce many saline plants, of which the following are the principal: *Scirpus maritimus*, *Salicornia herbacea*, *Glaux maritima*, *Suaeda maritima*, *Glyceria distans*; these have a wide range over the whole interior wherever salt lakes are found.

"The whole distance between Rat Creek and Fort Carlton, a tract of over 350 miles, is remarkable for the sameness of its flora. Very little change was noted after crossing the Assiniboine, except a few plants peculiar to sandy soils. The hill-top, the plain, the marsh, the aspen copse, the willow thicket—each had its own flora throughout the whole region, never varying and scarcely ever becoming inter-mixed. Even the fresh water ponds could be noted by their grasses being different from those bordering the saline ones. That there is a great uniformity respecting soil, humidity, and temperature throughout this whole region is apparent from the unvarying character of its natural productions. How much of it is suited for the purposes of agriculture, a hurried ride through it cannot show. But this much was seen, that wherever the soil or the natural contour of the land would interfere with the raising of grain, immense herds of cattle, droves of horses and flocks of sheep could be raised. This taken in connection with the immense herds of buffalo that formerly grazed on those boundless plains, should cause the most skeptical to form a higher estimate of the value of this far off land. It requires very little prophetic skill to enable anyone to foretell that very few years will elapse before this region will be teeming with flocks and herds." (Fig. 22.)

The following paragraph refers to his stop at Fort Carlton on his way home from the Peace River country in 1875:

"I rested two days at Fort Carlton and, in the meantime, had the pleasure of meeting Capt. Crozier, of the Northwest Mounted Police, who had been a Lieutenant in the company in which I served at Prescott, in 1866. We were pleased to see each other and Mr. Clark, the gentleman in charge of Carlton, invited us both to dine with him that evening. Besides the



FIG. 22—Some of the farm animals envisioned by John Macoun in this fertile portion of Western Canada.

Captain and myself, there were two priests, one of whom was named Pere Andreau. While taking dinner, we were discussing the future of the country and Pere Andreau said that he was going to bring a large number of half-breeds from Manitoba to settle on the Saskatchewan and form a new French province. After dinner I told Captain Crozier that I would make a note of what the priest had said as it meant trouble in the future and that I would advise him to do the same. Whether he did so or not I cannot say, but he commanded the Northwest Mounted Police at the battle of Duck Lake, the first engagement in the rebellion of 1885."

A couple of incidents which occurred on the trip from Carlton to Fort Garry are included here:

"One morning, when we were about to start, I decided to remain behind and write up my notes and was busily engaged when I became poetical and had just written: 'I think I hear the tramp of the coming millions,' and, as I had reached this period, a concert broke out a few yards behind me, and, on looking around, I saw a line of coyotes sitting on a ridge and giving their peculiar howl. I need scarcely add that I never became poetical again. When I mentioned it to the men, they said that coyotes always followed a party of half-breeds when on the trail to pick up the refuse of the camp when they had left."

It was the month of October and as they travelled along the Carlton Trail they met cold weather and snow. Regarding one of the camps along the way he wrote:

"Our fine weather continued until the evening of the 23rd of October when it began to thicken up and the next morning we were off long before daylight, but, as the day broke we saw that we were in for a snow-storm. We halted in a little clump of willows and had a cup of tea. We had scarcely started again when the storm broke and, in a few minutes, the air was filled with driving snow. For the next sixteen miles there was neither bush nor tree, and for the whole of this distance we tramped against a furious gale and driving storm. Late in the afternoon of the 24th, we reached the timber and, under the direction of our experienced guide, penetrated to a little marsh surrounded by wood, and camped. We could hear the roar of the gale outside, but not a breath stirred where we were. There was fine pasture for the horses and cattle in the marsh and we had no difficulty in making ourselves comfortable. In a short time we had blazing fires and, after the ice was thawed off our clothes, we sat about the fire making a shelter for the night. I lay under the wagon with my feet to the fire and was so comfortable that I never wakened until the morning."

The following excerpt is taken from Macoun's account of his start from Fort Ellice in 1879, when he came up the Assiniboine River by steamboat.

"Without accident we reached Fort Ellice and all our possessions were placed on the bank and we took possession and carried them up to the prairie above. My man was there with the horses (all the way from Winnipeg), and we erected our tents and got our things under cover as soon as possible. We had three tents—one for myself and nephew, another for Mr. Wilkins and his brother-in-law and another for Matheson and Ogilvie. When we had all our belongings together and our four carts and two buckboards, my assistant, Wilkins, came to me and said: 'Professor, we will never be able to take all this stuff on our conveyances; we simply cannot do it under any circumstances.' I knew now was my time to assert myself and I said: 'Boys, from what Mr. Wilkins says there is some doubt as to our ability to take all our stuff with us and I wish to tell you that "can't" is not in my vocabulary and the man who uses it on this trip can consider himself dismissed. The boat has not gone back yet and any man who wishes to return is at liberty to do so at once, but I wish to tell you that, from this time forth, any man who thinks he knows more about his work than I do ceases to be an employee of mine.'"

As a sequel to this little episode he has the following to say about their activities the next morning:

"My next order was to separate all the men's belongings. Mr. Wilkins and myself were to take everything that belonged to us on our buckboards and, to each of the men, I assigned a cart and he packed his share of the stuff in it in his own way with the understanding that whatever was in the cart could be got at the shortest notice. In other words, our men must know where each article that he had in his cart was placed.

My reason for doing this was that I had a spade, an axe, a shearing-hook, and many other small articles that might be wanted for instant use, and I desired each man to be aware of what he carried. When we began to tie up our stuff and fix it all, we found that we had room enough for all we had."

One fine portion of the new land was bounded on the east by the 102nd meridian, on the south by the Qu'Appelle Valley, on the west by Last Mountain Lake, on the north-west by a line from the north end of Last Mountain Lake to the Quill Lakes, and on the north by a line from these lakes to Fort Pelly. This area was bisected diagonally by the Carlton Trail. Regarding this large district Macoun had the following things to say (21):

"This tract of country contains at least 7,000 square miles, or about four and a half million acres of excellent soil. It is true that the western side is almost devoid of wood, but to compensate, the hills, extending along its flank, are covered with trees. Proceeding northward of the travelled road (i.e. the Carlton Trail), the country becomes more broken, ponds and marshes are numerous and wood increases in both size and quality, until it merges into continuous forest south of the present telegraph line. A rich black loam about fifteen inches in depth, containing small grains of quartz or other rock, is the prevailing surface soil, but this imperceptibly passes into lighter colored sandy loam, as the timber becomes more continuous and of larger growth. The subsoil is generally a lighter colored marly clay, but this again, in the ridges, passes into gravel, which is generally gneiss covered with a coating of carbonate of lime . . .

Abundance of good water is found on every part of this tract for the greater part of the summer, and future settlers will find that good permanent wells can be obtained, at a reasonable depth, on any part of the prairie. Poplar wood for house-building, fencing, and firewood, can easily be procured at Pheasant, File and Touchwood Hills, which extend from southeast to northwest through its whole extent. Almost continuous woods extend along the Carlton Road from twelve miles east of its western boundary to where the Qu'Appelle and Pelly Road crosses it. Thence eastward extends the Pheasant Plain, a stretch of twenty-five miles long, without wood, but Pheasant Hills having abundance of it, are always in sight. East and northeast of this plain, copse wood is more or less abundant, until the Assiniboine is reached . . . While encamped at the head of Last Mountain Lake in 1879, we had ample opportunity to examine this part of the country. We were particularly charmed with its soil, productions, and position. Multitudes of pelican, geese, ducks, avocets, phalaropes, water hens, and grebe, besides innumerable snipe and plover were everywhere in the marshes at the head of the lake or along its shores, or on small islands lying to the south of the camp. This was early in July and experience tells me that not one-tenth was then seen of the bird life assembled in September and October."

"Extending west from the Touchwood Hills, is a level plain (Fig. 23) without wood for thirty miles on the line of the Carlton Trail. This plain has been erroneously called the Great Salt Plain, whereas the part of it to which the term applies, is scarcely twelve miles wide on the trail.



FIG. 23—*The Quill Plains along Highway No. 6, just south of Dafoe. Note the high water table.*

. . . . There is undoubtedly a saline depression extending from Quill Lakes to Long Lake, the worst parts of which are largely made up of white mud swamps or brackish marshes, but there are no data to show that it covers twenty per cent of the area assigned to it."

The Telegraph Line

A new innovation, having some connection with the Carlton Trail, was the long telegraph line from Winnipeg to Edmonton (22). For a time, it followed the original survey of the first transcontinental railway, passing from Selkirk across the narrows of Lake Manitoba, through Livingstone, Humboldt, Clark's Crossing, and Battleford. The eastern section from Selkirk to Livingstone, a place 12 miles from Pelly, was built and in operation by July 1876. The western section was completed to Leduc by November of the same year. It was finally extended to Edmonton early in 1879. After crossing the Carlton Trail at Humboldt the telegraph line followed closely the route of the present railway from Humboldt to Langham but continued on up to Battleford on the south side of the North Saskatchewan River. There were several so-called "stations" along the line, at each of which was an operator and a lineman. For the first few years, George Weldon served as lineman, and his wife as operator, at Humboldt. Many travellers became acquainted with these hospitable people and held them in high esteem. Their station was about five miles west and two miles south of the present town-site.

Much trouble was experienced in keeping the line in operation. The eastern part passed through a lot of low marshy land and woods and, in

the west, the buffaloes pushed over many of the poles while rubbing their shaggy sides against them. At times prairie fires burned down a great many of the posts which supported the wire. Owing to the change in the routing of the C.P.R. the portion of the original telegraph line, east of Humboldt, was abandoned about 1881 and new lines, from South Qu'Appelle to Humboldt and from Clark's Crossing to Prince Albert, up the west side of the river, were completed by the fall of 1883. At times business over the line was very slack, especially during periods when the wire was down in places. On occasion checker matches were played between checker enthusiasts of Battleford, Edmonton, and Qu'Appelle; also medical advice was dispensed up and down the line from a medical book in the telegraph office at Battleford. However, in the spring of 1885 the telegraph line really proved its worth and the wires were kept hot throughout the period of the rebellion. It was an important factor in the suppression of the disturbance.

A telegraph station was established in the Touchwood Hills at Kutawa in 1883. Mr. Von Lindeburgh was placed in charge of this station and the central section of the line between South Qu'Appelle and Humboldt, and he continued to look after it until the line was finally dismantled in 1922. While he was away inspecting and repairing the line, his wife acted as operator. One of the most difficult parts of his beat was the stretch across the Quill Plains. In the winter he would load his repair kit on a horse-drawn sled, together with supplies of bacon, bannock and tea, and travel his beat, sleeping in the open. At times he carried bandages for his horse's legs to protect them from the crust on the surface of the deep snow. About 1908, when the main line of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway was being built through the Touchwood Hills, Mr. Lindeburgh did a rushing business sending and receiving messages for the men of the construction camps. The railway passed within about five miles of Kutawa. The importance of the government line decreased rapidly after this railway with its accompanying telegraph line was completed, but the old line continued to function to some extent for another fourteen years or so.

James Trow

James Trow was chairman of the immigration and colonization committee of the Canadian House of Commons in 1877. In the summer and autumn of that year he made a tour of parts of Manitoba and the North West Territories. He was inspecting the country with a view to deciding in his own mind its suitability for agricultural settlement. All through his account (43) of his trip this topic is uppermost in his mind. However, he produced a very readable story of what he saw and heard and, in the light of later developments, his opinions and prophecies are most interesting.

Mr. Trow started out from Winnipeg, accompanied by his son on August 4th and a few days later an old acquaintance, named Moss, who had settled in Manitoba, joined them for the trip. Between them they

had a team of mules, a fine team of Indian ponies, a Red River cart and a buckboard. Apparently Mr. Moss was a resourceful individual who could cook, hunt, repair broken vehicles, and make himself generally useful, in short, he was an excellent man to have along on such a journey.

First of all it may be well to outline the route which they followed. They went by the old Trail to Fort Ellice and on towards the Touchwood Hills until they came to a trail, which branched off to Lebreton and Fort Qu'Appelle. They followed this and after visiting Fort Qu'Appelle they went north on a trail to the mission now on the Gordon Reserve in the Little Touchwood Hills. From the mission they took a trail which brought them back to the Carlton Trail near the point where the first Hudson's Bay post in the Touchwood Hills used to stand. Following the Carlton Trail to Humboldt they took the left branch which followed the telegraph line in a westerly direction for a time, and then passed north of Muskiki Lake near Bremen and crossed the South Saskatchewan at Gabriel's Crossing. After visiting Fort Carlton they went to the Prince Albert settlement. On their return journey they travelled southwest past Red Deer Hill and the half-breed colony of St. Laurent, joining the old Trail at Batoche from whence they took the other branch back to Humboldt. After reaching the site of the first Hudson's Bay post in the Touchwood Hills they continued along the Carlton Trail passing the third post which remained in operation until 1909. In fact they followed the original line of the Carlton Trail all the way from Batoche to Winnipeg except where diversions occurred in the settled parts of Manitoba. They arrived back at Winnipeg about the middle of October after having travelled over 1600 miles.

During the trip Mr. Trow met a number of noted men and saw many interesting sights. At Silver Heights, just west of Winnipeg, he saw thorough-bred horses and domesticated buffalo belonging to the Hon. Jas. Mackay. At the home of the Hon. D. A. Smith he noted preparations for the entertainment of the Governor General of Canada. At Portage la Prairie he visited the home of Mr. Kenneth McKenzie, who was a farmer and also a member of the provincial legislature. After travelling through comparatively well settled districts, all the way from Winnipeg to a point some distance west of Portage la Prairie, he mentions passing isolated settlers and small colonies further westward. For instance, at the first of the Three Creeks, he mentions a Mr. McKinnon whose nearest neighbor to the east was 24 miles away, while to the west it was 80 miles to Tanner's, on the Little Saskatchewan River. The year 1877 was one of high precipitation in Manitoba and Mr. Trow makes many references to the high level of the water and the difficulty experienced in crossing the lowlands and creeks in the province. He also mentions two toll bridges, one over the Little Saskatchewan and one over the Assiniboine River. At the former stream they were met and questioned by Captain French of the Mounted Police regarding any liquor which they might have in their possession. Near Shoal Lake, at the spot where a trail branched off for Fort Pelly, they found Col. Richardson and his family encamped. The Colonel and

his family were on their way to Battleford where he was to serve as stipendiary magistrate. When Mr. Trow and his companions reached Fort Ellice they found that hundreds of Indians had gathered there to receive the annual payments of money and goods accruing to them by the terms of the Treaty No. 4, which was negotiated in 1874. They found Mr. Archie McDonald in charge of the Hudson's Bay post. His thoughts were now turning from the fur trade to the supplying of settlers' requirements, the disposal of Hudson's Bay Company lands, and the need of railways to aid in developing the resources of the North West. During his stay at Fort Ellice, Mr. Trow heard Archdeacon Cowley preach to the Indians, with Mr. Pratt, a well-educated Cree Indian, acting as interpreter. Mr. Pratt was living in the valley at Qu'Appelle when Dr. Hector, of Palliser's Expedition visited that place in 1857. Here is Mr. Trow's description of the service:

"The chiefs and a large number of their bands attended, and squatted on the ground inside the tent. The Indians conducted themselves in an orderly manner, and would frequently applaud the speaker with a grunt—hoh, hoh. The squaws were not admitted into the tent; poor creatures, they were all busily engaged dressing hides, repairing tents, making fancy bead work or gathering fuel. The Indians were inveterate smokers, and the odour emitted from that horrid weed they smoke (the dried bark of the red willow, called kinnikanic) is very unpleasant. They smoked during the delivery of the sermon. A headsman would fill a large stone pipe having a stem two and a half to three feet long, and this pipe was handed to the chief, who took a few graceful puffs and handed it to the next in rank, and so on round the circle. After the pipe returned to the chief it was again replenished by the headsman and sent on its mission of peace. The tent in which the service was held was covered with buffalo robes, 24 in number on the lower tier. The poles coming together at the top left scarcely any room for ventilation. The Indians sat round with a blanket or robe covering their loins, their bodies to the waist perfectly bare; many of the leaders were tattooed all over the breast."

Concerning the payment of the treaty money he says,

"On Monday morning I accompanied Capt. McDonald, paymaster, to the Indian encampments. The natives gathered round his tent like bees around a hive, anxiously waiting for their little pittance in money and provisions. The contractor having killed and distributed among them a dozen oxen that morning, the paymaster opened his cash box. The natives presented their little brass tokens, and received their respective amounts. The greatest harmony prevailed, although occasionally a little bickering would take place when claiming pay for so many wives and children. Polygamy seems to prevail to an alarming extent. Many have two, three, or more wives, and for each they are entitled to \$5.00. The sum total paid foots up to precisely the same amount in the aggregate, whether the Indian has one wife or ten, but the moral effect is bad. In the evening, numbers of the natives assembled in one of the chief's wigwams for the purpose of seeing Capt. McDonald present to the chiefs and headsmen, new suits of clothing. One of the chiefs, named White

Bear, a very corpulent, elderly man, requested Capt. McDonald to allow him to present his son, young White Bear, with the suit designed for him; that he was getting feeble and it was his desire and the wish of the whole tribe that his son should put on his mantle. Capt. McDonald made an excellent and appropriate speech. The chiefs put off their robes, stood erect, and each made suitable reply. After this ceremony we all assisted in dressing the chiefs and headsmen in their gaudy new attire, but failed to convince them of the utility of a pair of pants. The party afterwards escorted the captain in military style to his headquarters at the Fort."

At Fort Qu'Appelle they found a huge assemblage of over 5,000 Indians with 500 teepees awaiting the arrival of the paymaster. Affairs did not run so smoothly here, for the Indians were dissatisfied with the quality and quantity of provisions issued to them. However, after some days of stalling and arguing they accepted their payments and provisions. These included 25,000 pounds of pemmican and three or four hundred sacks of flour. At that time there were five men, at the mounted police post in Fort Qu'Appelle, under the command of Capt. Griesbach. Mr. McLean was in charge of the Hudson's Bay post.

After leaving Fort Qu'Appelle Mr. Trow wrote:

"We travelled during the day 35 miles, and in the evening we camped near Child's Mountain, a spur of the Little Touchwood Hills. The water of the little lake adjoining was somewhat dark but drinkable. We took an early start next morning and in a few hours arrived at an Indian or half-breed settlement. All the males were out hunting buffalo on the plains for their winter supplies. One of the half-breeds had the previous day killed a stray buffalo bull. Aged buffalo bulls are often found at great distances from the herd—occasionally three or four together, and are easily slaughtered. A short distance beyond we arrived at the English church mission, under the charge of Rev. Joseph Reader. The mission buildings stand on the brow of a hill, fronting a beautiful little lake (Fig. 24). The missionary has under cultivation a few acres, and the vegetables and roots in the garden were excellent. Several half-breeds reside in the neighbourhood and cultivate small patches. The Government furnished them with grain and potatoes. The soil is a rich loam. The vegetables were much earlier than I expected and of extraordinary growth. I mounted a ladder or frame scaffolding attached to the stockade of the mission, and from the observatory I obtained a magnificent view of the surrounding country. To the south and south-west I looked across an extensive prairie, with occasional elevations or hills dotted promiscuously here and there, as if to embellish the scenery, and away beyond the view extends to the valley of the Qu'Appelle. The Last Mountain is also seen to the south-west but distant many leagues from the position it is represented on the map. To the east among the trees can be seen the mission schoolhouse kept by Mr. Settee. Away in the west, Heart's Hill is seen towering above all the rest, and, far beyond it, the great salt plains. The whole country presents a lovely appearance; abundance of good timber, sufficiently large for building purposes is seen to the north of the mission. . . . Rev. Mr. Reader seems perfectly contented with his isolated position, shut out from society and civilization. He complains,



FIG. 24—Anglican mission on the Gordon Indian Reserve, about seven miles south of Punnichy. The lake was nearly dry when this photograph was taken in July 1949.

however, that there are no regular postal privileges. It is only by chance that he can correspond with his friends and acquaintances. The previous day he had received a letter from a relative residing in England, bearing date July 1876, it having been over 13 months in reaching its destination."

Describing his experience in crossing the South Saskatchewan Mr. Trow wrote:

"After preparing breakfast, we started for the river—two hour's drive. We arrived at the Ferry (Gabriel's Crossing), and having no horn whistled for Gabriel, for we could not see twenty feet in front (because of a dense fog). The ferryman soon appeared, and made preparation for crossing. The boat was a flat-bottomed scow, roughly put together. Our animals were unhitched, the carriage and cart put in the centre of the boat, the mules on one side, the horses on the other. Gabriel gave instructions by signs and some doubtful French. The mules were very obstinate and troublesome to put on board. He had probably been more accustomed to oxen than mules and undertook to twist the tail of one of the mules. Instantly he received a kick below the ribs, in that portion of the body called by pugilists "the bread basket." Each of our party undertook to row with an unyielding oar, first keeping along the shore and working upstream; fortunately the wind was favorable, which counteracted the force of the rapid current. The river has a swift current, and is probably over 200 yards in width at low water, with an average depth of 8 to 15 feet. The fee paid Gabriel was \$1.50 for ourselves, horses and carriages."

While at Fort Carlton, then in charge of Mr. Clark, he wrote,

"I met at the Fort Mr. Wm. McKay, agent at Fort Pitt, and others who had just arrived from Battleford. They stated that Mr. Sutherland and his workmen had just completed the Parliament buildings, Governor's residence, offices, and residences for the several Government officials—some 22 buildings in all. They were reported to be finished in splendid style."

About the middle of September they visited the settlement of Prince Albert. Here they found that about seven hundred and fifty pioneers were scattered along the south side of the North Saskatchewan river for a distance of about 25 miles. The settlement possessed Wesleyan, Presbyterian and Church of England missions, two good schools, and a grist mill, saw mill and shingle mill run by steam power. Cereals, potatoes and other vegetables were producing remarkably well. The settlers had about 8,500 horses and cattle and considerable farm machinery brought in at great expense. They were finding poultry raising rather difficult because of the ravages of wolves and Indian dogs. Here he met Capt. Moore, an Irish gentleman of considerable means who had joined the colony and had brought in the machinery, for the various mills, all the way from Ontario.

After leaving Prince Albert they came down to Batoche through the Metis settlement of St. Laurent. Of this place he wrote,

"The soil here is much lighter than at Prince Albert. We drove from house to house for information respecting the crossing, but to our astonishment the settlement was deserted, and the doors and windows were locked or nailed up. After many unsuccessful attempts along the numerous trails, at last we arrived at the mission and found Father Foremond at home—"monarch of all he surveyed." This gentleman was alone, the only male inhabitant that could be found for miles. Fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters, absolutely all excepting a few old men and young children, were away to the plains with their horses, cattle and dogs; hunting the buffalo and preparing their winter supplies. The younger members of the family take charge of the stock, the father and oldest sons chase and kill the buffalo, the mothers and daughters prepare the pemmican and dried meat, and tan and cure the robes. Many of these hunters are satisfied with supplies sufficient for the year; others remain longer and return with loads for sale to white settlers and traders. The French half-breeds are very indifferent farmers; they love a roaming, exciting life, are fond of the dance and assembling for fun and frolic I produced my credentials—a letter of introduction from his Grace Archbishop Tache—to Father Foremond, who very kindly invited myself and party to dinner. Letting out our animals we took a stroll through the church property, while the reverend father prepared the dinner, for he was a man of all work. Father Foremond is a devoted Christian minister; his very appearance would convince the most skeptical that he was sincere and devoted to his charge. — The chapel is erected on the summit of the river bank (Fig. 25), overlooking the residences of his parishioners for miles on both sides. In front of the church on a raised platform or triangle is hung a large bell, which can be distinctly heard for miles. Near the church we found an enclosed



FIG. 25—*Catholic church at St. Laurent, July 1951.*

burying ground. Down in the dingle north of the house in a sheltered nook we saw a beautiful spring boiling up."

We cannot dwell on other incidents of their return journey but Batoche himself, then over eighty years of age, ferried them across the river and told them tales of buffalo hunting in his younger days. Just before they crossed the telegraph line they noticed the Hill of the Cross and gained a fine view from its summit. Regarding it he writes,

"On the summit of the highest cone of this range of hills was erected a cross. We climbed up the steep acclivity, and from the elevated position we had an extensive view of the surrounding country. Along the north side of the mountain, at its base, there is a succession of lakes gradually growing less by the washings of sediment from the hilltops, and the growth and decay of vegetable matter."

Once their camp fire nearly started a prairie fire when a breeze sprang up at night. Before reaching the Quill Plains they met Governor Laird and his family on their way to Battleford. Trow's party experienced both snow and delightful "Indian summer" weather before reaching Winnipeg again. In conclusion he said,

"I have satisfied myself and returned with my mind stored with many interesting and pleasant recollections of my travels, and have unbounded faith in the great future of the great North-west."

Lizzie McFadden

Intimate glimpses of the trials and reactions of the rank and file of the early settlers who came into the Saskatchewan country via the Carlton Trail are afforded by the diary of Lizzie McFadden (10). Lizzie was fourteen years of age when she made the trip in the summer of 1879, and her people were on their way to settle at Prince Albert. The trip lasted from July 3rd to August 26th. Had it not been for the fact that Lizzie kept a diary we would never have heard a word about the journey, but fortunately she did keep one and we will draw on it for a few pictures of travel by Red River cart in her day.

"Thursday, July 3rd, 1879: Left Winnipeg. The horses balked; went about a hundred yards and the harness broke and it rained about ten minutes. Two hours getting through a mudhole. Got about two miles and the cart axle broke and we had to camp for the night." Not a very auspicious start, was it?

"Monday, July 7th: It rained all Sunday night, so we did not start very early, but when we did we had splendid roads all the way and no trouble with the oxen. There were two cart trains passed us on the road. One train contained about 76 horses and carts; crossed one creek. It was pretty deep. We camped about 7 o'clock beside some half-breeds and slept soundly all night."

"Thursday, July 10th: Started to look for our oxen this morning; they got away in the night. The boys tramped all the morning and found them about five miles away. We started about ten o'clock. Had a good many mudholes to go through. Our pony got down in a hole coming through a great slough and the oxen had to pull us out. We camped on a beautiful hill with white poplar at the back of us. It is the nicest place we have seen yet. The mosquitoes are not so bad, and it is very pleasant."

"Saturday, July 12th: Started at 5 o'clock in the morning and made seven miles by nine o'clock. Camped and fed the horses at High Bluff. Saw the Orangemen pass on their way to Portage la Prairie. Started again at twelve o'clock; had good roads, then we had to double over a mudhole; then had good roads all the way to Portage. Arrived there at 7 p.m. Mr. Carruthers met us as soon as we got there and I went to buy some bread. It was four loaves for 25 cents. Camped by a house and got lots of water there. Looks like rain."

"Sunday, July 20th: Rested today. Very pleasant day. Baked cakes and pies all morning. Read all afternoon. A minister came to see us in the middle of our cooking. Went for a walk in the evening. Mosquitoes nearly ate us up. There were lots of trains passed us today. Cool this evening."

"Saturday, July 26th: Started pretty early. Had a fearful time with the horses. Had a great many sloughs to cross. Camped and had dinner. Rested about two hours; then started and got to Shoal Lake about five miles. Had to cross the lake. It was up to the wagon box. Camped near



FIG. 26—Assiniboine Indian with buffalo-hide lodges. Travois are leaned against the one on the left.

the barracks. Had the police visiting us this evening trying to find out if we had any liquor about us."

"Wednesday, July 30th: Started very early and came over 28 sloughs before dinner. After dinner we had splendid roads. When we came in view of Fort Ellice there were great hills to go up and we had to cross a bridge over the Assiniboine; then climb high hills and reach the top of them at 7 o'clock. I was frightened by some Indians on the road (Fig. 26). Fort Ellice is a very pretty place but no farming country. It is very cool tonight."

"Saturday, August 2nd: Started very early. Had a great many sand banks and sloughs to cross. Passed the McDougal party today. Mr. McDougal is going to preach tomorrow, and we are going to camp near them. Made a very big day. Mosquitoes very bad tonight. It was about nine o'clock when we camped. We are about two miles from Cut-Arm Creek."

"Thursday, August 7th: We are still in the Touchwood Hills and likely to be. They are very long. We have not so many sloughs as we used to

have, but the roads are very rough. We have a party of half-breeds with us who are going to Prince Albert and have lots of company. They have a cow and we have lots of milk. Travelled very late tonight."

"Thursday, August 14th: Started very early and crossed the (Quill) Plains. Ox is much worse today. It seems to be lamer. This morning there were two policemen passed by and in the afternoon we met them. One, S. J. Donaldson (subsequently the local member for Prince Albert), was sick. Mother gave him some painkiller. In the evening Hon. Matthew Ryan passed on his way to Battleford to council. We travelled very late this evening and the mosquitoes were terrifying. Pa had to come slower with the ox. Camped by Mr. Ryan's this evening."

"Saturday, August 16th: The ox seems to be much worse today, so we had to travel very slowly. Passed a man going to Winnipeg from Glencoe, Ontario. He knew Uncle James well. Then we passed another man, a brother-in-law of the breed. We got to Humboldt at noon and camped there. The breeds came along and went on without us as they were in a hurry to reach Prince Albert. In the afternoon Captain Moore came to visit us. He came down from Prince Albert to telegraph. Had a visit from Maggie Leggett and brother-in-law. She brought us over to see her sister. They are very friendly people. We did not start tonight."

"Thursday, August 21st: Did not start until after breakfast. Reached the level (the ferry) about 10 o'clock. There were lots of Indians there and the men got four of them to help them. We got over the ferry about 2 o'clock; got up the hill. Found a shagnappi bag full of tent pegs. Camped on the top of the hill. We baked and went to water the cattle and there were Indians coming across the ferry, so we picked up and went up three miles."

Apparently the new settlers were somewhat suspicious of the natives!

"Friday, August 22nd: Started very early. Made a good way before breakfast. Had a good many hills to climb. Camped at night by St. Laurent mission. Went to the house and got some potatoes from Father Andrews (Fr. Andreau). He was very kind and gave them to us for nothing. There was a thunderstorm at night."

"Monday, August 25th: Started about ten o'clock today as it was raining. Got to the commencement of the settlement where we camped. Rained all morning."

"Tuesday, August 26th: Started after breakfast and came through the village. Camped at noon the other side of Captain Moore's hill. Had the Captain and McKenzie to see us after dinner. Then we started and went to Captain Young's and there we had to stay as we could get no further on account of the smallpox."

Fifty-four days on the road from Winnipeg to Prince Albert—give me an aeroplane!

Rev. Daniel M. Gordon

In 1879 the Rev. Daniel M. Gordon (8) of Ottawa went to San Francisco by rail and then north to the Skeena River from whence he crossed Northern B.C. with Messrs. Cambie, Macleod, and Dr. G. M.

Dawson, the celebrated geologist. From Edmonton he travelled East alone by way of Battleford, Carlton, Gabriel's Crossing and Humboldt. At that time Battleford had been the capital of the N.W.T. for three years. It boasted a Hudson Bay post, a N.W.M. Police barracks, a printing office, a few shops, and several dwelling houses. At Humboldt he visited the telegraph station but found that the line was down somewhere to the east of that point. In passing through the Touchwood Hills he crossed one of the newly established Indian reserves. Here, Mr. Scott, the instructor of the Indian Farm, had a number of Indians busily engaged working the land and building barns. The chief, Day-Star, was setting his tribe a good example by adopting a settled life and by farming some land. On October 17th he reached the Hudson's Bay Company's trading post, the third one which was built in this area, and the one whose remains lie beside the present highway between Lestock and Punnichy. At numerous points along the route Gordon noticed that prairie fires were burning. At Fort Ellice he remarked that the post was no longer surrounded by a palisade for protection from the Indians (Fig. 37). Just another sign that the old order was changing. Also at Bird-Tail Creek he learned that the Hamilton Colonization Company had secured two townships with a view to settlement. At Shoal Lake he found a Mounted Police post; at that time this place was on the western border of Manitoba. Here all the westbound travellers had their luggage examined and none were allowed to take in liquor except by special permit. At Salt Lake he fell in with some Ontario farmers who had just selected farms nearby. At the Little Saskatchewan they were visited in camp by a couple of Scotsmen, one of whom had spent some years in Ontario. Gordon asked him how long it was since he had left Scotland. "Hoo did ye ken that I cam' frae Scotland?" asked his new acquaintance in surprise! Finally on approaching Winnipeg they found that the construction of the C.P.R. west of the city had commenced, and the farmers between Portage la Prairie and Winnipeg were threshing their wheat. Winnipeg was then a lively young city of 10,000 inhabitants.

Hon. J. F. Betts

In 1879, in the month of May, a young man of twenty-five arrived in Winnipeg from Ontario. He was J. F. Betts (10), future resident of the young colony of Prince Albert and future speaker of the legislature of the North West Territories. For a time he took a job as cook for a group of Indian-Farm Instructors who were stopping at Winnipeg temporarily before going out to their posts of duty on the reserves. But soon he decided to go to the Prince Albert settlement with an acquaintance named Gwynne as a trader.

Accordingly they left Winnipeg on July 1st with an "outfit" of two oxen, a horse and three carts filled with provisions and groceries. They walked beside the carts the whole distance of five hundred odd miles and arrived at Prince Albert on August 18th. He made his home in Prince Albert but in the following years did considerable freighting and so became very familiar with the Old Trail. At one time he had a train of



FIG. 27—*"The Hill of the Cross" as it appeared in September 1954. It is now called Mount Carmel.*

39 carts drawn by oxen and ponies. One man usually took charge of four carts and ponies or oxen. A cart could carry from 750 to 1200 pounds of freight and twenty miles a day was considered good progress. It usually took from forty to fifty days to travel in this fashion from Winnipeg to Prince Albert. On one trip during a particularly wet season he says he started out over the Quill Plain at sunrise and at sunset he had not advanced his train more than a thousand yards in spite of hard work the whole day. At times these early freighters earned the five cents per pound that they charged for freighting goods from Winnipeg to Prince Albert.

According to Mr. Betts, birch wood was at a premium around Prince Albert in those days.

"The birch was not very plentiful and the Indians were very jealous of what there was for making their "jumpers" (sleighs made out of rough wood). Once Gwynne went over the river for wood and he ran into a beautiful grove of birch. He cut it all down. Then I thought of a good scheme, and that was that we could write some Christmas cards on birch bark. So we assembled around the fire and pulled a lot of the bark off and trimmed the pieces up pretty good and put "Merry Christmas" on them, and those Christmas cards went to England and Ireland and all over Canada."

We are indebted to Mr. Betts for the following account of "The Hill of the Cross" which is now known as Mount Carmel (Fig. 27). This hill,

three miles north of Carmel, Sask., is now crowned by a statue of Mary and the infant Jesus.

"In the year 1878 a party of half-breeds were going into Winnipeg. There was a priest with the party. There was a young half-breed girl and they were going down to Winnipeg to marry her to a fellow she did not want. They found her dead in her tent. She had taken poison. There was no service over her as she was a Catholic and had committed suicide. A cross was erected on the hill. It was about 14 feet high and the cross tree would be 8 or 10 feet long. There were about 50 names carved on it with jack-knives when I saw it. The cross was made of spruce or tamarack. There was no inscription on it. The Hill of the Cross was just 12 miles on the Prince Albert side of the old telegraph station. They called it 12-mile plain. There was a bluff and the cross was on the edge of the wood. The trail ran past the foot of the hill. There was a spring right in the side of the little mountain and the spot was a great camping ground. The top of the hill would be several hundred feet above the level."

It may be noted here that the exact date when this cross was erected is a matter of uncertainty. Jarvis noted it in the spring of 1875 and Trow mentioned seeing it in 1877.

The Surveyors

A most interesting episode in the history of Western Canada was the surveying of the vast territory into townships and sections so that the Hudson's Bay Company, the railway companies, and the settlers could find their lands without any trouble or confusion.

The men who carried out this huge task probably varied greatly in outlook and temperament. Those who had the vision to see something of the possibilities of the new land, and who also had the capacity to enjoy the rugged life they were called upon to endure in their daily routine, must have felt that it was a privilege, indeed, to pave the way for the settlement of the rich farm (Fig. 28) and range lands stretching all the way from the Red River to the Rocky Mountains.

The general plan of the survey was very simple and clear cut. Starting along the international boundary line in south-eastern Manitoba, the whole country was divided into townships six miles square, and each township was subsequently divided into thirty-six sections, one mile square, with road allowances dividing them. The sections in turn were divided into four quarters each containing 160 acres. The first strip of townships, lying east and west along the international boundary, were all referred to as "Township number one," and each successive strip to the north of it was numbered in numerical order. Beginning at several different meridians of longitude, the strips of townships running north and south along the west side of the meridian in question, were referred to as Range one, west of the First, Second, or Third Meridian, as the case might be. The strips of townships to the west of it became Range two, Range three, Range four, and so on

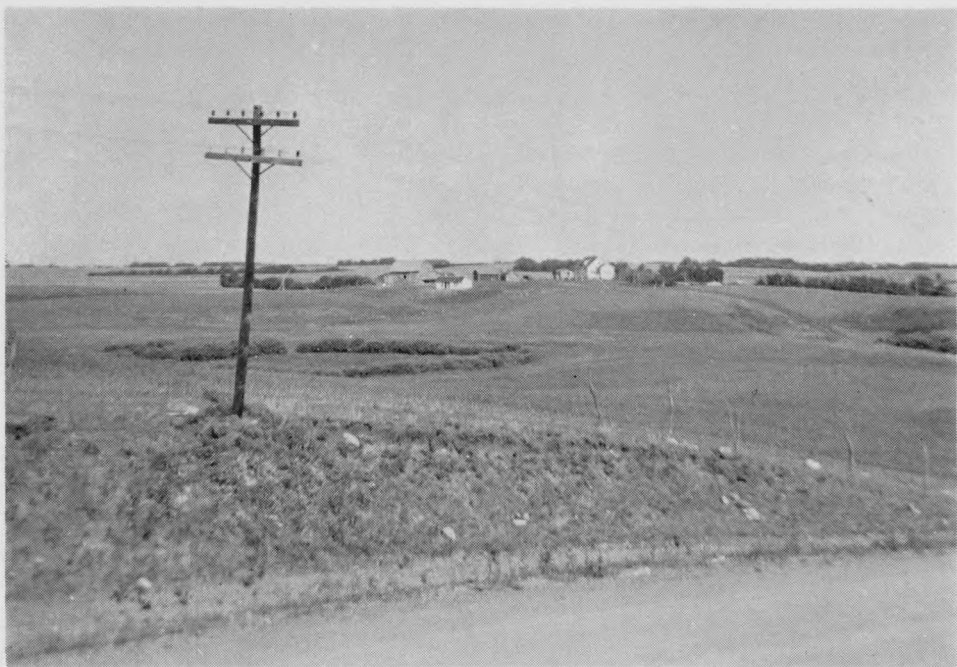


FIG. 28—Well-established farm in rolling park land. In the hollow beyond the telephone post is a "hay slough" surrounded by a ring of willow bushes.

until the next meridian was reached. Stakes were placed at the north east corner of every section and township with numbers carved on them. Thus, after the survey was completed, every individual quarter-section in the surveyed portions of the North-West had its own special numerical designation. For example, the quarter section on which the third Hudson's Bay Post in the Touchwood Hills was built, was designated as follows: S.W. $\frac{1}{4}$ Section 29—Township 27—Range 15, West of the 2nd Meridian. The Second Initial Meridian passed close to the east of Fort Pelly and about 30 miles west of Fort Ellice. Certain irregularities occurred here and there, because the Meridian lines get closer together as they approach the North Pole, and a few of the older settlements were surveyed before the area as a whole was marked out.

One great advantage of the simple system of survey was this—by finding one of the survey posts one could easily compute how far, and in what direction, he was from any place of which he already knew the location: e.g. 31-25-14 W. 2nd Mer. is nine miles N.W. of 1-25-14 W. 2nd Mer., or 12-15-10 W. 3rd Mer. is 30 miles N. and six miles E. of 12-10-11 W. 3rd Mer.

Fortunately we have available the first-hand account of Mr. A. J. Loveridge, of Grenfell, Saskatchewan, of how surveying parties were organized and how they travelled to the areas assigned to them and accomplished their work.

The following extracts are taken from Mr. Loveridge's written account (16) of his own experiences:

"As a youth of nineteen I was engaged with the survey party of D. C. O'Keefe, at Winnipeg in 1882. After we had loaded our outfit on a railway car we left the city early in July. Our outfit consisted of two oxen, one milch cow, four Indian ponies, two Red River carts and three other carts, a buckboard, two tents, camping and surveying equipment, provisions and baggage."

"At that time the railway line ended at Oak Lake, Manitoba. There we loaded our carts and proceeded over the prairie until we reached a cart-trail leading from Fort Ellice in Manitoba to Qu'Appelle in Saskatchewan. Following this cart-trail, we touched the construction work on the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway, at a point now called Broadview. Then we travelled north-west, and entered the Qu'Appelle Valley down the Hudson's Bay Hill, (which is north of the town of Summerberry). We proceeded up the valley and crossed the Qu'Appelle River at a place now known as Ellisboro, where a family of half-breeds by the name of Rosette lived in a log house. They operated a raft as a ferry, and as the river was high that year and for many years after, and could not be forded, our carts, etc., were taken over on this ferry. The oxen, cow, and ponies were forced to swim across.

"We called at the Lebret Mission, where three French half-breeds were engaged to go with our party. They proved to be valuable helpers, and they remained with us until our work was completed. At Fort Qu'Appelle we halted for a day, and then proceeded northwards following a cart-trail for several days, and then struck across country to the south of Township 29, Range 3, west of the third meridian. We ascertained our position by the survey marks, for that country had been or was being surveyed at that time. It had taken us four weeks to reach the point where we began our work of surveying.

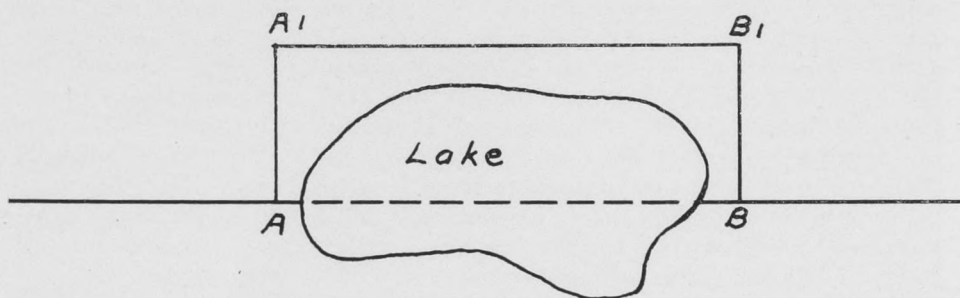
"While travelling on the trail north of Fort Qu'Appelle, we overtook a band of freighters, who were taking loads to some of the northern trading posts, and we travelled with them for that day. I counted over ninety carts strung out, one behind the other, that day. These freighters were half-breeds, who rode ponies, and they kept the oxen and ponies hitched to the carts, on the move. They travelled about fifteen miles a day, but as we were anxious to get to our work, we pushed on faster than they. This proved to be a mistake, for we played out our oxen and ponies, before we reached our work.

"The outlines of the townships were supposed to have been surveyed previously by another party. Our work was to subdivide the townships into sections and quarter sections. However, we found it necessary to outline some of the townships before we could subdivide them.

"The head surveyor and the assistant used an instrument called a theodolite, which I understand is a certain type of transit. This instrument is made of brass, and is mounted on a tripod about four or four and a half feet high. It is fitted with two levels, so that it can be set quite level, and a plumb bob is used for setting the instrument over a marked spot on the ground. It is equipped with a telescope, which is hung in a frame, and which can be turned over, so that the operator can look backwards to a spot from whence he came, set the telescope in

place by using clamp screws, and then turning the telescope over he can look directly ahead.

"In the telescope there are two hairs or silk threads, stretched across, one running horizontal and the other vertical, so that the operator can sight an object through the telescope, at a point where the silk threads or hairs cross in the exact centre. The telescope could be turned around at any angle, and fastened in place. When we came to a lake too deep to wade through we would survey around it (See sketch).



Simple method: If the necessary offset distance from the line AB was short, perpendiculars $AA_1=BB_1$ were erected to clear the lake. The line A_1B_1 was then chained and its length was taken as AB.

"My first job at surveying was that of picket man. I carried a pole painted black and white (or it may have been white with red), about one and a half to two inches in diameter, and about seven feet long. It was iron shod at the bottom, and pointed so that it could be pushed into the ground. There was a flag at the top, so that it could be seen from a distance of from one-quarter to half a mile, or perhaps even further.

"I would go ahead of the surveyor, in as near as possible straight line to the highest ground or ridge. I would then hold the pole upright, and face the surveyor. He would have his instrument set, and would wave to me with his arm, either to the right or left, until I had placed the pole in exactly the right place to one inch. Then he would wave both arms downward, which indicated that I had placed the pole in the proper place. I would then make a hole in which to set another stake, for we carried several with us. This would be of the thickness of a good walking stick, and perhaps five feet long.

"While I was proceeding onward to another high piece of ground, the surveyor would come to the place where I had placed the stake. He would take it out, and set his instrument directly over the hole, using a plummet, level the instrument, and sight back to the stake from where he had started. He would then turn the telescope over to the direction in which we were surveying, and again direct me, as before, on the exact line. In this way we could continue.

"The two chainmen, with a sixty-six foot steel chain, would follow close behind. When they had measured forty chains (or half a mile) along this line, they would mark the spot with a poplar post. This post was about three feet long, and two or three inches in diameter. It was

flattened on TWO sides with an axe, and marked " $\frac{1}{4}$ " with a knife on one side or both sides of the post.

"When the chainmen had measured another forty chains, they would set in the ground a post flattened on FOUR sides. On the south-west side of the post would be marked the numbers of the section, township, range, and meridian. For example, X XXV VII III would mean Section 10, Township 25, Range 7, West of the third meridian. In this way we would survey from the south line of a township, northwards to the northern line of a township. Only the east and north sides of the section were marked with posts, so that in later years when the road allowances were marked out, the measurements were made from these posts. However, when we made correction lines, two rows of posts were required, on each side of the road allowance.

"When we reached the 'top' or northern part of the township, we seldom hit the post or mound, as outlined by the township surveyors, for we might be east or west of it by many yards. If this were the case, a man would be sent back, perhaps for one or two miles, to move the posts, either to the east or west as the case might be, and as figured out by the surveyor. The first post would be moved a certain distance, the second post a shorter distance, and so on. This accounts for the fact that some roads are not straight.

"After the lines had been corrected, a man or perhaps two men, called the 'mound-builders' would build mounds around the posts. They would use a sharp spade, and build the mound about two and a half feet square, and about eighteen inches high, with the dirt taken out of four square holes of a certain size. The township corners had larger mounds than those used for marking the sections, and we used an iron stake, about one inch thick, and we marked the Roman numerals on, with a cold chisel.

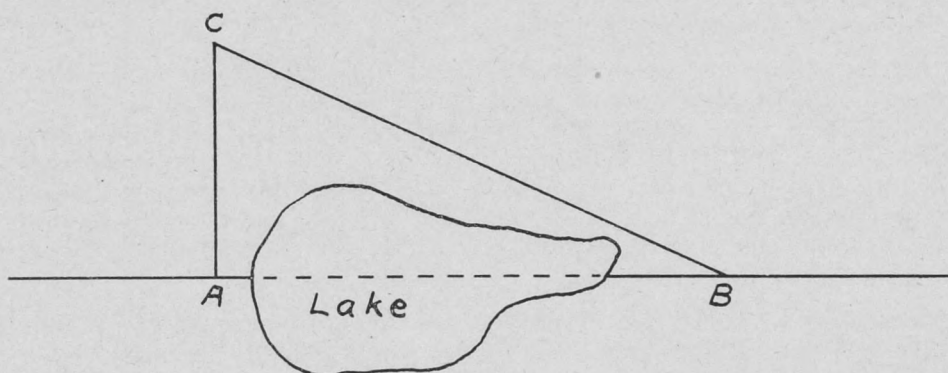
"Sometimes we found that the section posts should be located in a slough, lake, or creek. If such were the case, we would place the post on higher ground close by, and measure the distance from the post to the place where the post should have been, and make the necessary notation in our record book. This post would be marked differently, and the mound would be round with a ditch around it.

"After working for several days as a picket man, my job was changed to that of head chainman. The name 'head chainman' may seem confusing for I was at the rear end of the chain. I had a half-breed to pull the chain. He would carry ten steel pins, made of heavy stiff wire, about eighteen inches long. At the top of the pin there was a round loop, and the bottom of the pin was sharpened, so that it could be pushed into the ground. When the chain was pulled to its full length along the line, straight, and just tight enough, I would say 'right' or 'down.' The other man would push the pin into the ground, and go on, as before, to measure another chain's length. In this way we continued until all ten pins had been set in the ground. I would then pick up the pins, and count them, and give them to the man pulling the chain.

"I found this work as head chainman to be very exacting. We chained long stretches, and as I have said, in addition to outlining the sections

we also outlined some townships. We put in correction lines, which were very difficult, and I found it necessary to keep a level head, in order that the measurements would be correct, and the posts properly marked. "As head chainman I carried a book in which to make records. For every ten chains measured, I would record in the book 'I talley.' When four talleys were recorded (being one-half mile) a stake or post would be set in the ground. At the proper places we allowed one chain for the road allowance. I also recorded in the book notes regarding the type of country, whether flat or undulating, hilly or otherwise, scrubby, bluffy, stoney, sloughy, the kind of soil, stoney, alkaline, etc. When we came to a fair-sized lake, I would mark in the book the measurement to the edge of the lake, from the last post, the width of the lake, and draw a sketch of the shape, etc. On Sundays while in camp, I would carefully copy these notes and records into a much better book.

"We waded through, and chained all sloughs, provided the water did not come up to our shoulders. At such times I carried my notebook in my cap, which was a tam o'shanter. Where there was little or no grass we called them lakes. If these sloughs or lakes were too deep to wade through we would measure around them and this work took a long time. Sometimes we would make a triangulation (See sketch).



The angle at A was 90° . AC and BC were measured. Knowing the length of AC and BC, the length AB could be computed.

"In the fall we worked until dark, and then made our way back some miles to the camp. Often we walked but sometimes we rode in a Red River cart. When it was clear we guided ourselves by the stars, until we sighted the lighted cook tent, or the camp fire. When it was overcast or foggy, and we could see no stars, we would note the direction of the wind, and travel accordingly.

"The half-breeds could find their way over these miles of prairie much better than we white men, for we had little sense of direction, and soon became lost. I will say that I considered myself pretty good at finding my directions. These half-breeds were also very good at telling the time by the sun.

"During the summer the only wild life we saw were some jumping deer, wolves, foxes and prairie chickens, and plenty of gophers and ducks. I think that we outlined and subdivided fourteen townships.

"We finished our work on November 10, and commenced our return journey across the ninety miles of plains. We followed a cart-trail from the Whitecap Indian Reserve, which was a few miles north of where we had finished our survey; and then we went on to the Touchwood Hills Trading Post, which we reached after travelling about five days. From this trading post we proceeded to Fort Qu'Appelle, where our party disbanded. During the summer the railway had been extended, so we took a stage to Qu'Appelle station, and then travelled by train back to Winnipeg, arriving there about the 20th of November. One of the first things we did was to have a good clean-up, a shave, and a hair-cut, for we had let our beards grow, and we certainly looked like wild men."

The Survey Reports

In 1886 the Department of the Interior at Ottawa issued a publication entitled "Descriptions of the Townships of the North-West Territories, Dominion of Canada, Between the Second and Third Initial Meridian" (46). In it are to be found reports sent in by the men in charge of the surveying parties who marked out the virgin prairies and woodlands of south-eastern Saskatchewan into townships, sections, and quarter-sections. Evidently the townships were blocked out first and a year or two later another party marked out the smaller units within each township. These reports described the topography of the land, and its suitability for farming purposes, rating it as first, second, or third class land. The reports also mentioned the presence of lakes, streams, or trails of importance. The Carlton Trail was referred to repeatedly, but received quite a variety of designations, such as "the main trail from Fort Ellice to Edmonton," "the Winnipeg and Battleford trail," "the trail from Fort Ellice to Touchwood Hills," "the Prince Albert trail," and "the main cart trail, to and from Carlton, Battleford, and Fort Ellice." The point I wish to make is this: the famous prairie highway, which had connected Fort Garry, Fort Carlton, and Edmonton for a period of nearly forty years did not have any commonly accepted name among these various survey parties, and few of the leaders seemed to know just where it led. The following are a few samples of the many entries referring to the Carlton Trail to be found in the surveyors' reports:

"There is a cart trail leading from Fort Ellice to Touchwood, that crosses it from the south-east to the north-west corner." L. E. LeMoine, 1882. Township 23, Range 8 (near Fenwood, Sask.).

"The Saskatchewan trail crosses Section 18." J. L. Reid, 1882. Township 25, Range 10 (near Hubbard).

"The Winnipeg and Battleford trail crosses Section 13." W. Ogilvie, 1880. Township 26, Range 13 (near Kelliher).

The author saw the old trail near this place in 1908. It passed just to the south-west of Birch Lake and the site of the present town of Kelliher, and about eight miles north-east of our homestead. It had already fallen into disuse but its ruts were still quite distinct. It consisted of six or eight

wheel tracks, winding in unison between the numerous bluffs and sloughs, and avoiding soft spots and steep hillsides as much as possible.

Township 28, Range 16—"The main trail from Ellice to Edmonton crosses Section 19." E. Deville, 1880. "The telegraph line and trail to the north-west cross the township diagonally." J. L. Reid, 1880-1881.

This is the township in which the telegraph station at Kutawa and the old Indian Agency were located.

Township 30, Range 18.—"A small creek, 4 feet wide, 12 inches deep, good water, swift current, and a cart trail from Touchwood Hills to Prince Albert, cross Section 30. An old cart trail and the telegraph line from Touchwood Hills to Prince Albert, and a ravine 20 feet deep, cross Section 31." A. C. Talbot, 1883.

Township 31, Range 18.—"The old cart trail from Touchwood Post to Battleford and Prince Albert passes through the south-west corner of Section 6." A. O. Wheeler, 1884.

These last statements show that the trail followed alternate routes at certain places. The two just mentioned lie along the present Highway No. 6, at points about ten and eleven miles south of the town of Dafoe.

The following is the report of the survey party that outlined the township on which the telegraph station of Humboldt stood in 1883:

Township 37, Range 23 "Outlines: West—broken, open, rolling prairie. Numerous small marshes were crossed. Subsoils, sand, sandy clay, clay and yellow clay; class 2. A ridge and a coulee cross Section 6. The cart trail from Touchwood to Prince Albert, and the telegraph line, cross the township. East—rolling to level prairie, half covered with willow and young poplar; there is also a large quantity of small, dry poplar. Soil, 4 inches deep, on clay, yellow clay, sand and sandy clay subsoils; class 2. Sections 25 and 36 are rolling, open prairie." A. C. Talbot, 1883.

At the time these reports were compiled, the townships along the Carlton Trail from the Quill Plains to the vicinity of the present town of Wakaw had not been subdivided, and those in charge of the survey parties which outlined the townships made very few references to the Carlton Trail. However, a map of the whole region was included with the report, and this shows the route followed by the trail, all the way from the point at which the trail crossed Big Cut Arm Creek (near Fort Ellice) to Batoche and Gabriel's Crossing.

The routes followed by the trail and the telegraph line are shown in greater detail on large-scale sectional maps of the Touchwood, Humboldt, and Prince Albert South districts. These were published in 1914 and 1916. According to these maps, Kutawa (Fig. 29) was on the N.E. $\frac{1}{4}$ of 10-28-16, W. 2nd Meridian. The Humboldt telegraph station (original site) was between the N.W. $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 9 and the N.E. $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 8-37-23, but it was subsequently moved to the N.E. $\frac{1}{4}$ of 23-36-23. The Hoodoo stage coach station was about the middle of Township 41, Range 25.



FIG. 29—*The old stone church at Wishart, built in 1888. It was 'quite near Kutawa and the Carlton Trail north-east of Punnichy.*

Lord Lorne, Governor-General of Canada

In the summer of 1881 Lord Lorne, then Governor-General of Canada, made a tour through Manitoba and the North-West Territories. Mr. W. H. Williams, a special correspondent of the *Toronto Globe*, was sent out West to accompany the Governor-General's party and report matters of interest in connection with the trip to his paper (48). We will concern ourselves with the portion of his trip during which they followed the Carlton Trail.

Starting out from Winnipeg on August 8th, they travelled by train until they reached the end of the track, then at a point about 35 miles west of Portage la Prairie. On the way they saw a herd of domesticated buffalo feeding near the railway just east of Stony Mountain. They were the property of the warden of the penitentiary. At Portage la Prairie a large crowd of whites and Indians was gathered to welcome Lord Lorne. The Sioux and Ojibways remained apart in two separate bands as they apparently were not on very friendly terms.

At the end of the steel they were met by an outfit in charge of a detachment of Mounted Police under the command of Colonel Herchmer. The Mounties made a very fine showing in their bright uniforms and the horses were fine looking animals decked out in attractive harness. Enough carriages and baggage wagons were provided to carry the Governor-General's party, but Mr. Williams was travelling with his own equipment: a buckboard and a team of horses, with a half-breed to help look after the horses and do the cooking. Between Portage la Prairie and Fort Ellice the vice-regal party made several stops at embryonic towns, where they were

accorded rude but enthusiastic receptions. At Fort Ellice, Lord Lorne was entertained at the Hudson's Bay post by Archie McDonald. That summer, river steamers were plying between this post and Fort Garry via the Assiniboine River. About 500 Indians were gathered at the post to see the Queen's representative and he held a pow-wow with their chiefs. The Indians were dressed in their picturesque native costumes.

The Governor-General next visited Fort Qu'Appelle, but Mr. Williams' buckboard broke down and he did not succeed in catching up with the party until it was past the Touchwood Hills on its way to Carlton. His account of his reception on rejoining the party is as follows:

"I had now gone ten miles north and west on the Edmonton (Carlton) trail before I had the satisfaction of seeing His Excellency's camp pitched just to the left of the trail. I had been out of sight of it for just one week, and doing all in my power to reach it. I met with the most cordial and hearty reception on reaching the camp, and my mares had hardly come to a standstill before some of the Mounted Police Force were unharnessing them, while others were unloading the wagon and pitching my tent. I had barely set foot upon the ground when I was cordially welcomed back to camp by Colonel DeWinton, who brought a request from His Excellency that I should dine with him. It is needless to say that such a cordial welcome was grateful this evening, after what has been to me unquestionably a very hard and perplexing week's work. According to his custom His Excellency had camped on Saturday night to remain without stirring further till Monday morning, and it was in this Sunday camp that I overtook the vice-regal party. The only events of any account which had taken place in Lord Lorne's progress during the past week were the loss of some few horses and the loss of a finger by Constable Leamy of the Mounted Police. A wagon had stuck in a mudhole, and he was adjusting a rope with which it was to be pulled out, when the horses started up suddenly and his finger was caught in a bit of rope and was crushed so hopelessly that Dr. Sewell found it necessary to amputate it at the second joint."

Upon reaching the South Saskatchewan River at Gabriel's Crossing, Mr. Williams crossed over and drove ahead to Carlton, but the Governor-General's party went north about six miles and crossed at Batoche.

"Less than half an hour after my arrival here an escort of Mounted Police came cantering down to the Fort, quickly followed by ambulances containing His Excellency and suite, and these in turn by the remainder of the outfit. I must admit that I was not a little surprised, not merely with the fact that Colonel Herchmer and his men had succeeded with a single scow in bringing over a broad, swift river in five hours an outfit consisting of twenty loaded ambulances, baggage wagons and other vehicles, and no less than eighty-one horses, but after this severe task, and after the officers and men of the force had been steadily engaged in such a long and arduous march through the wilderness, they should be able to ride into the fort clean, pipe-clayed, and in all respects as though they were just out of their barracks, seemed well nigh incredible."

Fort Carlton at this time was still in the hands of the Hudson's Bay Company. During his brief stay here, Lord Lorne was the guest of Mr.

Lawrence Clark, chief factor of the Carlton District. An assemblage of chiefs and head men met the Governor-General at this place. During the pow-wow, Mistawasis, an old and celebrated Cree chief, spoke as follows:

"I am glad that God has permitted me to meet the Governor. I feel flattered that it was a Governor who put this medal on my neck. I did not put it on myself. We are the children of the Great Mother, and we wish that through her representative, our brother-in-law, she would listen for a little while to our complaints and sympathize with our sufferings. I have no great complaints to make, but I wish to make just a few remarks concerning our property. The kindness that has been shown us is great, but in our eyes it is not quite enough to put us on our feet. In days gone by the buffalo was our wealth and our strength, but he has left us. In those days we used the horse to chase the buffalo, and when the buffalo left us we thought we might use the horse to follow after other game but we have lost many of our ponies with the mange and we have had to sell others, and when I look around me and see that the buffaloes are gone and that our ponies are no longer left to us, I think I and my people are poor indeed. The white man knows whence his strength comes and we know where we require more strength. The strength to harvest crops is in animals and in implements, and we have not enough of these. If our crops should be enough to keep us alive we would not have the means with which to harvest them. We would very much like more working cattle and more farming implements. I would beg also that if possible a grist mill should be put up somewhere within our reach, so that we can have our wheat ground into flour and our other crops ground. I do not speak for myself but those poor people behind me. I am very thankful that I am able to see the Governor-General in my old days. He has come just in time that I may see him before I die. Many a time have I been in terrible straights for food for myself and my people, but I have never been angry about it, for I knew the Indian agent was a good friend to us, and that he always acted on the instructions left for him, which he was bound to obey. Often have I been sorely perplexed and miserable at seeing my people starving and shrunken in flesh until they were so weak that with the first cold striking them they would fall off their feet and then nothing would save them. We want teachers to instruct and educate our children; we want guns and traps and nets to help us to get ready for winter. We try to do all that the farm instructor has told us, and we are doing the best we can, but, as I said before, we want farming implements. I do not speak for myself, as I am getting old, but I speak for my people and for my children and grandchildren, who must starve if they do not receive the help they so much need."

Truly a forceful exposition of the Indian's position at that time, and an eloquent plea for help of the proper kind, from the race which had bought the Indian's country for a mere pittance.

"His Excellency told them in reply that the Great Mother had many white children who were very poor, some of whom thought she was giving to the red man more than their share. She would gladly give them all that they needed, but she had so many poor children who

needed assistance that she could not always do as much for them as she would wish to. He had noticed, however, that some of their requests contained certain practical suggestions, and he would endeavour to see if some assistance could not be given them in that particular direction. His Excellency then presented Big Child (Mistawasis) and Star Blanket with beautiful silver medals with medallion busts of the princess and himself. One of the richest and most gorgeous Indian dresses I have ever seen was worn by the great Sioux chief, White Cap. He wore a beautiful snow-white tunic of fine caribou skin, richly ornamented with porcupine quills, coloured silk, and bead work. From his shoulders hung some twenty or thirty scalps taken in the horrible Minnesota massacre."

From Carlton the Governor-General's party went to the Prince Albert settlement on the steamer Northcote, and later took a boat trip up the river to Battleford on the steamer Lily. Then they travelled across country to Calgary, and on the way saw a herd of thirteen buffalo bulls of which they killed several. At the Blackfoot Crossing of the Bow River they found 2,000 Blackfeet encamped and near them a smaller encampment of Sarcees. Lord Lorne held a confab with their chiefs, headed by Crow-foot. They visited Calgary and Fort McLeod and then the vice-regal party proceeded home by Fort Benton and other points in the United States, but Mr. Williams and his half-breed helper returned via Edmonton, Battleford, Touchwood Hills and Fort Ellice.

They left Calgary on October 5th and were unfortunate in having an unusually wet and cold autumn in which to make the return trip. When they reached Clark's Crossing on November 11th, "lily pads" of ice were floating down on the rapid current and it was with some difficulty that they succeeded in persuading the ferry man to attempt to ferry them over. However, they got everything across by dint of much exertion but immediately the weather turned extremely cold and stormy. We will let Mr. Williams tell what camping in such weather was like.

"It is almost impossible for one who has not experienced a similar situation to fully comprehend our utterly dismal condition tonight. The cold is so intense that our mercury thermometers are of no use, and in addition to this a cutting wind from the north-east is howling hungrily over this great, shroud-like, treeless waste, so that it is with difficulty that we pitched our tents. The heavy Hudson Bay blankets have been damp with frost for weeks, and tonight as they were unfolded they were frozen stiff, almost as stiff as the frozen tents themselves. Let one who likes sleeping in a warm room judge how much comfort he could derive from shovelling the snow from off the rough, frozen ground, pitching a tent in a gale of wind with the temperature thirty-five or forty below zero, and after a half-thawed supper, wrapping himself in damp frozen blankets, and spending the night in sleeping snatches of an hour at a time, and the intervals in speculating as to whether he will be frost-bitten or not. Tonight is perhaps an exceptionally bad one, but it promises to be only a little worse than many others already experienced on this trip." This was at a spot about twenty miles east of Clark's Crossing.

Finally, he and a number of fellow travellers changed their wagons

for jumpers at the Touchwood Post and from thence made their way to the end of the railway at Brandon. Mr. Williams parted with his faithful ponies with keen regret and returned to the East over the new, partially completed Transcontinental Railway.

Senator T. O. Davis

In 1880, among the settlers who came into the Prince Albert district over the Carlton Trail from Winnipeg, was the late Senator T. O. Davis and his brother (10). They brought with them five carts and wagons loaded with merchandise and drawn by oxen. They left Winnipeg early in September. On the first leg of the trip, they experienced the usual difficulties negotiating the mud-holes, having to unload and re-load their carts many times. They travelled for a while with a half-breed family which was on its way to Batoche to settle in a new home. One of the half-breed's cows not only drew a cart but also supplied the party with milk! Evidently it was a wet fall and the streams they had to cross were greatly swollen. It took them a whole day to get across one of these on the Pheasant Plains. At one point they met Charles Nolin, former Minister of Agriculture in Manitoba, who had just moved to the Touchwood Hills. The Quill Plains had been softened up by the wet season and travel over them was very difficult. Mr. Davis wrote:

"At one place in the middle of the plain we got stuck. We tried to pull the wagon out but failed. The oxen got mired and we unhitched and unloaded the wagon. We had to take the wagon to pieces. We took the wheels off to get it out of the mud. It took us ten days to get across that plain. It was hard work day and night. Along the trail we occasionally met half-breed freighters going down for freight. They were Hudson Bay people."

After crossing the plain they met a freighter named Matheson who afterwards served at Onion Lake as an Anglican Missionary. Mr. Davis mentions meeting Mr. Weldon at the old telegraph station at Humboldt, which he says was about five miles west of the present town of Humboldt. Just beyond Humboldt a few miles they passed The Hill of the Cross. This was what is now called "Mount Carmel." At that time he says there was a twelve-foot birch cross planted on its summit in memory of a half-breed girl who committed suicide there rather than return to the Red River settlement and marry a man she detested. Davis says the girl's name—Miss McKay—was carved on the cross. At Batoche they saw the man after whom the place was named and stated that he had a big store piled up with stuff for trade with the Indians. Davis also states that the trader's real name was Letandre, and that the name Batoche was bestowed upon him by the Indians. The ferry at that time was run by Alex Fisher, a little dark man who afterwards became Lieutenant Governor in Riel's brief regime. They still had to track the barge upstream some distance before attempting to cross the river as they had no ferry cable as yet. From Batoche they took the branch trail leading to Prince Albert and arrived there early in November, having spent about two months on the way.

In June 1881, Mr. Davis started freighting on his own account with a string of nine carts and oxen. He wrote:

"I used to cart the stuff from Fort Ellice that summer. I walked every step of the way both ways. I drove all nine carts myself, as I was alone. I hitched and unhitched four or five times a day. The harness was a shaganappi harness made out of rawhide. They were made out of oxhide soaked in water and cut in strips. The lead ox was a better judge of a soft place than I was. He was a white ox and his name was Wabascow, which means 'white' in Indian. I had him leading with all the rest tied behind, the whole nine on a string. When he came to a soft place he would stop and look up and down and turn up the coulee or down, as the case might be, according to his judgment. He would go very slow crossing a soft place so as not to mire those behind him. His intelligence was really remarkable. He knew his business."

Mr. Davis continued to freight goods from Fort Ellice to Prince Albert in the summer of 1882. The distance was probably about 300 miles by the winding trail and the freighting fee charged was about five cents per pound. At that time coal-oil brought five dollars a gallon in Prince Albert, salt 25 cents a pound, and needles five cents apiece. The last trip each season—he made three round trips in 1882—was made in cold weather so he had to contend with snow and ice and endure many a cold camp. In addition he had to shoe his oxen, on one trip, to enable them to travel over the hard frozen ground. However, the enterprise seems to have been remunerative. By 1882 he says that there were mail stations every forty miles along the trail where the mail carriers changed horses.

With the advance of the railway and regular shipping facilities, it became possible to shorten the distance over which goods had to be freighted by cart or wagon to Prince Albert. From 1883 to 1885, Mr. Davis freighted supplies in from South Qu'Appelle instead of Fort Ellice.

Edward Field

An Englishman by the name of Edward Field came to the Red River Settlement in August 1867. For a time he freighted supplies from Winnipeg to Fort Ellice and the Touchwood Hills Post. After spending about nine years on various undertakings, such as fur trading and freighting, he homesteaded at Big Point on the west shore of Lake Manitoba. The following account tells in his own words how he and his family migrated to the Shell River district in what is now western Manitoba. In this trek he followed the northern branch of the Carlton Trail from Westbourne to Shoal Lake, where the Fort Pelly Trail branched off to the northwest.

"In 1880 the water of Lake Manitoba rose so high that it came into my stable, so I thought it time to leave. I had already received the patent for my place, but under the circumstances was allowed to homestead again. Therefore I pulled out once more, but it was no little undertaking. We had four children, one three months old, 30 oxen and carts, and 30 head of cattle, not to mention household effects. The Shell River

country, now Russell, was my destination, there were some 250 miles of bad roads, rivers and creeks to cross, and with cows calving and straying, sticking in mud holes, fighting mosquitoes, and numerous other difficulties, it was six weeks ere we reached the spot where Russell now stands, then called the Shell River district. Prairie City, or Tanners Crossing, now Minnedosa, was our nearest town 100 miles off. As we passed, the C.P.R. engineers were surveying their main line to run through Minnedosa, but of course the line was taken further south. I mention the foregoing to show the difficulties and the troubles one had to contend with in those days locating a new home, compared with the present day immigrant."

In 1892 Mr. Field and his family moved to the shore of Fishing Lake, near the place where Wadena now stands. Here he traded with the Indians and built up a horse and cattle ranch. As the district became settled he took his place as one of the leaders in the new community and served as justice of the peace and secretary of his local improvement district for many years.

Stage Coaches on the Carlton Trail

The following is an account taken from "Saskatchewan and Its People" by John Hawkes (10). It was written by Mr. A. C. Paterson of South Qu'Appelle.

"In the fall of 1882 the C.P.R. laid the track through to Regina, and the villages of Indian Head and Qu'Appelle were each nearly the same distance from Fort Qu'Appelle and the Prince Albert trail, so naturally a strong rivalry took place for the base of supplies for the north country. Qu'Appelle had the advantage of a somewhat better road and a few miles nearer and it became the distributing point for the North. Early in '83 a mail contract was awarded to Jim McLean, better known as Flatboat McLean, who shortly afterward transferred the contract to Leeson and Scott, and they kept the line in operation until the Regina and Long Lake and also the Calgary and Edmonton Railways were built.

"This stage line was splendidly managed. All along the trail from Qu'Appelle to Prince Albert and in fact to Edmonton, at intervals of forty miles, road houses were erected with a man in charge during the winter months, where not only the stage drivers and their passengers, but other travellers who were journeying the long, long, trail, found comfortable lodgings for the night at a reasonable cost. In addition to the mail sacks carried, a considerable amount of express was also handled. A four horse team was always used and frequently two of these teams went out and horses were always changed at the forty-mile stations. The wagons used were especially built, with comfortable seats for passengers and with space for mail and express. This line, together with all the freight for the northern points passing through, made Qu'Appelle one of the busiest points on the railway."

"The men who drove on this stage line were expert horsemen and sturdy, resourceful fellows, and many a blizzard they had to fight their

way through. Of these, I just recall Jack Art, Ab. Craig and Gordon McIver."

"This stage line was well patronized, as Prince Albert even in those days was the centre of an old settlement, and quite a village, besides being headquarters for a large detachment of North West Mounted Police."

Mounted Police on the Carlton Trail

Starting in 1874, and continuing down through the years, the North West Mounted Police made extensive use of the prairie trails until these were superseded by the straight graded roads and highways of the present day. Their first acquaintance with the Carlton Trail was made in the summer of 1874 (44). One detachment of mounted police, under Inspector

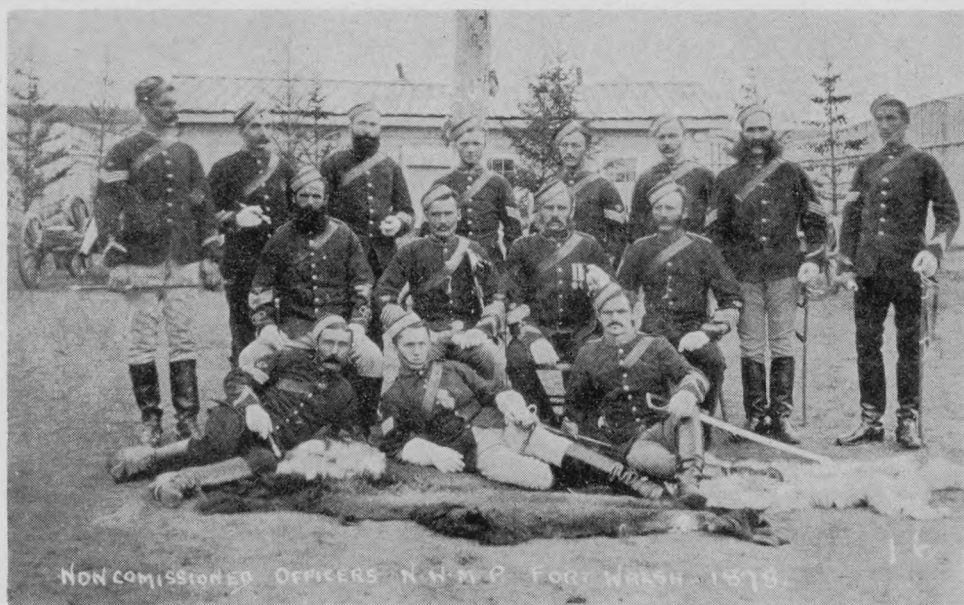


FIG. 30—This photograph illustrates the uniforms and equipment of the N.C.O.'s of the Mounted Police in the early years of the force.

Jarvis, branched off from the remainder of the force at Roche Percee, on August 1st, and journeyed to Edmonton via Fort Ellice and Fort Carlton. They reached their destination, after a trying trip, on October 27th. On numerous occasions after this lone riders or groups of these men followed portions of the Old Trail, winter and summer, for many years (Fig. 30).

When Inspector Jarvis and his detachment arrived at Fort Ellice on August 12th he proceeded to overhaul his entire equipment and transport. A portion of his force left him to start building winter quarters near Fort Pelly for Commissioner French and certain other detachments of the Mounted Police. As many of his horses and cattle were in very poor condition, some of these were left behind. On August 18th the main

body started out for Edmonton on the Carlton Trail. His force now consisted of 23 Mounted Police, 13 half-breeds, 30 horses, and about 100 cattle. Their supplies were carried in 53 carts and 12 wagons. The Qu'Appelle River was crossed the first day. The next day they camped at "The Spring" and prairie chickens figured prominently on their bill of fare. August 21st they crossed the Little Cut Arm Creek at a point 31 miles from Fort Ellice, so it can be seen that they were not making very fast progress. However, the evening menu was good—hot bread, butter, prairie chicken, veal, bacon, snipe, wild pigeons and tea!

At times it was difficult to find sufficient wood and water for their camps, and a certain amount of time was lost hunting for stray horses or cattle. A day's journey varied from 4 to 22 miles, depending upon the weather and the state of the trail. On August 28th they passed the Rev. George McDougall and the Rev. James Nisbet with their wives and a few others travelling to Fort Garry.

On August 31st they camped in the Touchwood Hills and the next day a cold rain fell on them. Wood was collected for crossing the Quill Plains. On the morning of September 2nd there was ice on the water buckets! This day they travelled 20 miles and had their first view of a strongly saline lake. Also a herd of antelope was seen. At last a slough of fresh water was reached and camp was made. The evening meal was featured by a plentiful supply of wild ducks. By September 5th they left the Quill Plains behind. Shortly after this they passed many brigades of hunters, freighters and traders from whom they purchased some pemmican.

On the evening of September 7th they reached Gabriel's Crossing. The following day they made use of a ferry to take their supplies across the river but they made their cattle swim across it. Fort Carlton was not reached until after dark on September 11th, as they were delayed by cold rain and the weak condition of their horses and cattle. The Hudson's Bay factor, Lawrence Clark, was most hospitable. Welcome shelter for the men was found in the fort and the horses were put in its stables. A considerable amount of barley was purchased at this point for the future use of the expedition.

The detachment continued its journey westward on September 21st, but they were greatly harassed by the feeble condition of their livestock, and it was October 27th before the leading teams finally reached their winter quarters at Fort Edmonton.

We are indebted to ex-corporal J. C. Donkin (6) for the following glimpses of the progress of a party of twenty "mounties," together with their commanding officer and sergeant, over a portion of the Carlton Trail in December, 1884. The officer and the sergeant were accompanied by their wives. They were being sent north as reinforcements because of the trouble brewing among the Metis and Indians around Batoche. The party set out from Regina, on December 13th, and travelled first to Fort

Qu'Appelle where they were detained for several days. Then they proceeded up the Touchwood Trail until they joined the Carlton Trail in the Touchwood Hills, and from this point followed the latter trail to Fort Carlton. They arrived at this post in an exhausted and frost-bitten condition Friday, December 27th, after having endured some of the coldest weather on record on the march. But we will take a few extracts from Mr. Donkin's story to illustrate the conditions under which they travelled and camped.

"The order of our procession was as follows: In front was a transport sleigh and a pair of horses, containing tents, camp stoves, and other equipment as well as our rations. Then came our line of jumpers, each driven by one of us in winter uniform. The officer followed us in a superior sort of jumper, a kind of aristocratic box, with varnished sides and high back, in which he could recline at ease. The canvas-covered sleigh, containing the ladies, drawn by a team, brought up the rear."

Of their overnight stop at the Hudson's Bay Post in the Touchwood Hills, he says,

"The officer, sergeant, and ladies billeted themselves in the factor's residence, whence the cheerful blaze of a log fire sent a ruddy glow on the snow outside. The stables were ruinous, great holes gaping through the timber of which they were constructed. Here we made our horses as comfortable as we could in such a breezy home. We were quartered in a dilapidated, ancient "shack," near the stables, on the edge of a darksome wood. It was weary work, carrying our bedding and grub through the snow drifts. We stumbled and plunged and fell again and again. There was a cantonment of redskins and half-breeds in the next-door compartment to us. One tall, blanketed savage came out, and stalked weirdly away, his grey figure appeared ghost-like in the wan glamour of the winter's night. Our temporary resting-place was not inviting. There was no glass in the antique window frame. The floor had yielded to decay in places, forming many pitfalls for the unwary. The walls were full of yawning holes, admitting every breath of air. We had a wretched night, in spite of our weariness, but after smoking the consolatory calumet, we all fell into an uneasy slumber. Shortly after midnight a huge black form came bounding through the rug we had fixed over the window, landing on the recumbent form of the gentleman from Middlesex, who wildly shrieked, "a bear! . . . a bear!" No doubt, he imaged, in this semi-somnolent state, that the whole menagerie from the surrounding bush had turned out to make a night of it. It was, however, only a train dog of the Huskie breed, in the service of the fort, who was attracted by the gleam of our pine logs. He made himself at home, after the storm of abuse had passed over."

"Sunday, December 21st, was the coldest day on record in the Northwest. The thermometer, on the Saskatchewan, registered minus 62° Fahrenheit; or **ninety-four degrees of frost!** As we passed the lonely hut, in which resided the telegraph operator, the mercury was frozen at minus 45° in the sun. The atmosphere was clear and bright, but cutting as the keenest steel. We kept up our circulation as well as we could, by running alongside the sleighs; this was no easy task in deep snow, with our weight

of furs and underclothing. We passed a weasenfaced old Indian, seated in state in his jumper with a great rabbit-skin robe around him; his squaw trudged alongside, and kept hammering the cayuse. We drove by the door of the Indian Agent's house, round which were a collection of painted squaws and braves in all the finery of many coloured blankets. Here our sleighs were piled with a supply of wood, for right before us, stretching from the foot of the hills, lay the grey expanse of the great Salt Plains."

Reaching the stage-coach station at Hoodoo, north of Humboldt, two days later, they found the house so bare and filthy that the officers and ladies slept in a tent and the men occupied the shack. The trek across the Salt Plains had been a real ordeal and the men bore plentiful marks of their experience. This was Christmas Eve and he wrote,

"We slept upon the floor as well as we were able. A disreputable crowd we looked on the following morning! Our fur coats were ornamented with hay seeds and straws. Our chins, noses and cheeks were raw with frostbites, and smeared with vaseline. One man was dyed purple; another blue, and a third was brown. A beard of a fortnight's growth did not add to the many fascinations of our appearance. The ladies entered the hovel to wish us all a very Merry Christmas; and we seemed to afford considerable merriment to them. We all blushed like a lot of idiotic schoolboys; and such was our plight on Christmas Day."

The next night they slept in Philippe Garnot's hostelry at Batoche after dining on steak and rice pudding. Besides the hotel there was, at that time, a Catholic church, a post office, a blacksmith's shop and a few residences including that of Batoche, which had many windows and was painted a pale green. Also, according to Donkin, Gabriel Dumont had a saloon at Batoche, a small low-roofed log building plastered with mud. In it French billiards was played, nauseous hop-beer was imbibed and much violent sedition was talked by the Metis who frequented the place. Many other settlers had homes strung along the river above and below the village.

Finally the troop reached Fort Carlton (Fig. 31) and received a rousing welcome there. Most of them stayed to reinforce the garrison of police at Carlton, but Donkin went on to Prince Albert, where he remained all through the rebellion, helping to protect the settlers at that point. Before proceeding with his account of his return journey to Regina the following August we will mention several incidents that occurred along the Carlton Trail during the rebellion of 1885.

The Mounted Police "Give the Metis the Slip"

After receiving an urgent call for further reinforcements from Superintendent Crozier of Carlton, Commissioner Irvine set out from Regina on March 18th with ninety men and the necessary horses and sleighs to convey them (44). They passed through Fort Qu'Appelle on the 19th, crossed the Quill Plains on the 22nd and camped that night at a stage-coach station six miles north of the telegraph station at Humboldt.

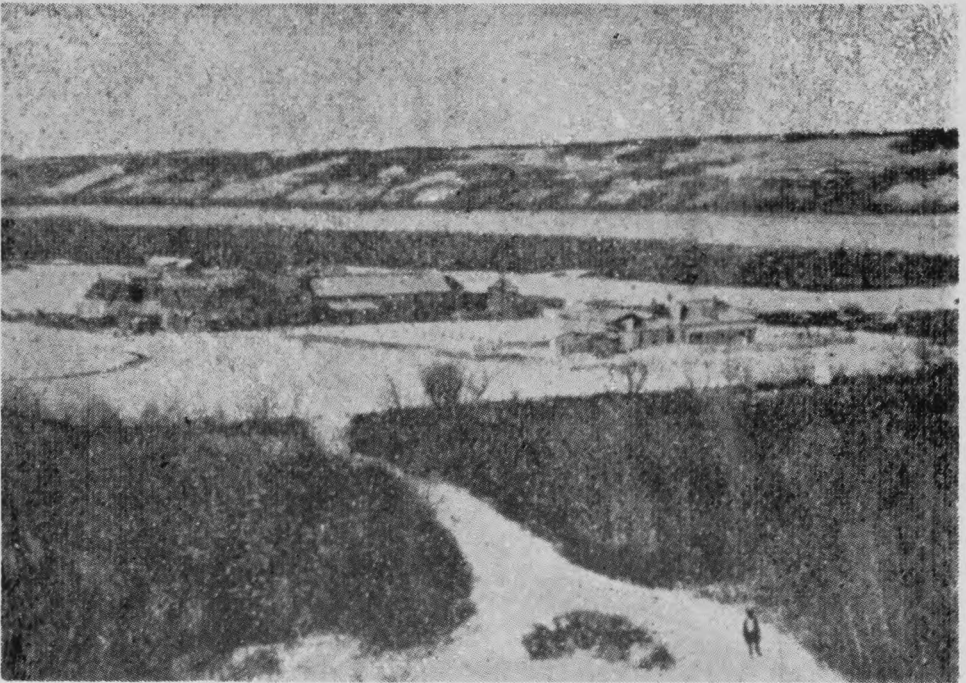


FIG. 31—Fort Carlton as it appeared in the winter of 1884-85, after it was taken over by the North West Mounted Police.

On March 23rd they reached a station called Hoodoo, and found that it had been sacked by the Metis. However, they camped there for the night. Having heard that the Metis were prepared to stop them at Batoche, Irvine led his men another six or seven miles along the trail and then made a detour to the north-east and north which took them around the western border of the Birch Hills and across the South Saskatchewan River at Agnew's Ferry and then on to Prince Albert, where they were received with great rejoicing by the settlers and police stationed at that isolated colony. Thus they completed a journey of about 300 miles in sub-zero weather in seven days.

The Battle of Duck Lake

As fate would have it, Superintendent Crozier and his force of about 100 men were drawn into a fight with a larger force of Metis on March 26th, just a matter of hours before Commissioner Irvine arrived at Carlton with another force of about equal strength (44). Crozier had sent out a party of seventeen men with sleighs to bring in some supplies that Hillyard Mitchell had left in the trading store at Duck Lake. Gabriel Dumont met them with a larger body of men at his command and turned them back. After consultation with his officers and those of the Prince Albert volunteers, Crozier started out with a force of 53 mounted police and 40 volunteers and a small field gun. They travelled in sleighs and, as the

snow was still deep, it was very difficult to manoeuvre his force except on the packed trail.

About two miles west of the Duck Lake store on the Carlton Trail they were confronted by the Metis. The enemy attempted to envelope Crozier's force while an Indian engaged Crozier and his interpreter in a fake parley. Firing broke out almost immediately and after half an hour's severe fighting the mounted police and volunteers retired with a loss of twelve killed or mortally wounded men and eleven less seriously injured. Some of the dead and the field gun were abandoned on the site of the battle.

Half an hour after the return of Crozier's force, Irvine and his men arrived at Carlton. Since it was considered more important to protect the settlers at Prince Albert than to hold Fort Carlton, the combined force made good their retreat to Prince Albert on the following day. In the excitement of leaving, a fire was started accidentally and much of the post was burned.

The Trail Becomes a Military Highway

In April 1885, a portion of the Old Trail was utilized by most of the troops of General Middleton in their march to attack the Metis at Batoche. These troops came from Winnipeg and Eastern Canada to South Qu'Appelle by train, and from that point, followed the Touchwood Trail via Fort Qu'Appelle to the place in the hills where it joined the Carlton Trail. From Humboldt they went west on the Battleford Trail along the telegraph line to Clark's Crossing. To this point the Midland Battalion came down the South Saskatchewan River from Saskatchewan Landing on the steamer Northcote. Part of the battalion was assigned to guard the stores at Clark's Crossing while the remainder pushed on and joined Middleton's forces at Fish Creek.

The following account is taken from a booklet entitled "The Riel Rebellion 1885," published by the "Witness" Printing House of Montreal (1).

"The first advance was made on April 9th by a detachment of the 90th (Winnipeg) and thirty scouts under Captain French. They reached Touchwood on April 10th, by which date the whole division, composed of the remainder of the 90th (Winnipeg), the first half of C. Company, the Winnipeg Field Battery and A Battery (Quebec), brigaded under Colonel Montizambert, the 10th Grenadiers (Toronto), and Boulton's Mounted Scouts, under Colonel Grassett, were on the way between Qu'Appelle and Touchwood. Four hundred horse teams transported the baggage and supplies of the forces. From Touchwood to Humboldt, a station where a large quantity of Government stores lay, which it was feared might be seized by the enemy, the distance was 78 miles, the weather was bad and salt bogs had to be passed, but it was done in four days. Though only 63 miles from Batoche, the rebels had not disturbed the Humboldt settlement. There the trail forks; one path continuing almost due north to Batoche, the other leading west along the telegraph



FIG. 32—The site of Fort Carlton as it appeared in November, 1954. In the foreground the weeds around several of the old cellars are visible. In the background at the right a remnant of the Carlton Trail may be seen climbing from the benchland to the plateau above.

route to Clark's Crossing on the South Saskatchewan River. The trail to Clark's Crossing was followed, and the advance force camped for the night 25 miles west of Humboldt at Vermilion Lake (Muskiki Lake). Fire signals blazed on the hills to the north and the west, showing that the troops had reached the enemy's country, their presence was known and their movements watched. At Clark's Crossing there were a couple of ferry scows, and as it was but forty-five miles from Batoche it was believed the rebels would seize it, destroy the scows, and attempt to prevent the troops from crossing. Next morning, with the intention of anticipating them, a dash over the thirty-eight miles was made in eight hours by French's Scouts, C Company and a few men of A Battery, and Clark's Crossing was safe. Though the men had marched the whole distance in eleven days—had travelled, wet or dry, twelve hours, averaging twenty-one miles a day—they were impatient to push on to Batoche."

However, the troops had to put up with considerable delay before Batoche was reached and captured. First they had to wait until the remaining units arrived from Qu'Appelle. They started northeast along the river on April 23rd and the next day fought the engagement at Fish Creek. Following this fight there was another long delay to await the coming of the steamer Northcote with reinforcements and supplies from Saskatchewan Landing near Swift Current. Finally on May 7th they resumed their march and after several days of fighting defeated the Metis defenders and captured Louis Riel, their political leader. However, their doughty military leader, Gabriel Dumont, who formerly operated the ferry at Gabriel's Crossing, escaped to Montana. Rifle pits were strategically

placed on either side of the Carlton Trail where it came into Batoche from the east. Apparently the Metis had expected the troops to attack from that quarter and had prepared a warm reception for them. During the battle the steamer, Northcote, ran down the river past the village with some troops on board. Besides peppering the boat with rifle fire from the high wooded banks, the Metis lowered the steel ferry cable and tore off part of the boat's superstructure and nearly stopped her completely, but she pulled free and passed on down the river to safety. The village of Batoche was somewhat battered during the battle, and sixty years later bullet marks could still be seen on the tower of the church there. As for Fort Carlton, it never rose from its ashes, and it ceased to be a stopping place on the way to Edmonton (Fig. 32).

Corporal Donkin Returns to Regina

The following autumn, Corporal Donkin returned to Regina in company with the same Mounted Police officer and his wife with whom he had travelled north the previous winter. They travelled by wagon, following the trail through the wooded sand hills to St. Laurent and along

the river to Batoche. The autumn air was very pleasant and redolent with the smoke of bush and prairie fires. As they travelled they shot enough prairie chickens and wild ducks to keep themselves supplied with fresh meat. Donkin states that the ferry cable at Batoche had been removed but a ferry was in operation propelled in the ancient manner with oars. The village of Batoche looked woe-begone and deserted. Its houses still showed the marks of war. The remains of Middleton's zareba and the rifle pits of the Metis were still fresh when Donkin passed them that pleasant autumn day, but all was calm and peaceful around the place.

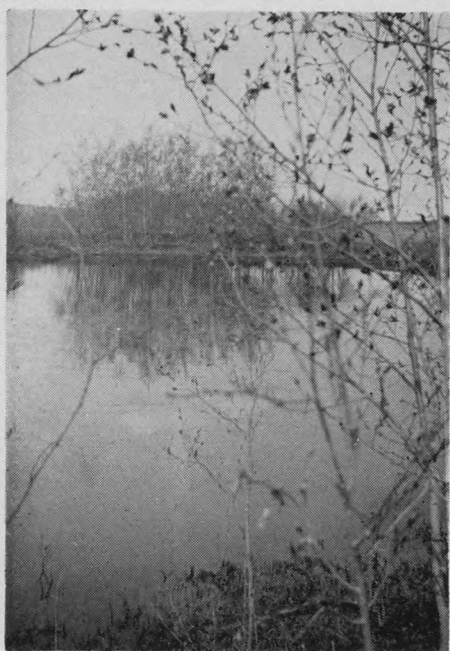


FIG. 33—A small slough in the Touchwood Hills. Seen in early spring when the poplar buds were bursting.

ing the night Donkin was suddenly roused from his slumber by the wild yapping of a pack of coyotes close to their camp. His description of the serenade is worth repeating:

They turned south at Batoche and followed the river to Gabriel's Crossing and took the newer branch of the Carlton Trail to Humboldt. On the way they made camp for the night in a delightful spot by a pretty little lake with bluffs of poplar and birch to shelter them from the wind. Dur-

"It must have been, I imagine, by the moon's position, about one o'clock in the morning, when I was suddenly awakened by the most unearthly row I ever heard. Evidently a Home Rule party of coyotes were holding an indignation meeting somewhere. First there was a peal of demon laughter, followed by a wild, despairing shriek, mingled with a howl from another portion of the orchestra. A series of sharp yelps—probably taking the place of our Hear! hear!—were now introduced, which were succeeded by another tumultuous burst of laughing. A grand finale of yells, shrieks, howls, barks, and screams of hilarity wound up the entertainment: it was evidently a great success. The cry of the coyote, breaking in upon the startled ear of night, as it invariably does, is about the most hideous I ever listened to."

Of their camp in the Touchwood Hills he wrote,

"We camped in a lovely spot—a gem of woodland beauty, in the rich setting of the fall. Groves of magnificent timber climbed the slopes, while a fairy lake peeped through the tangled screen (Fig. 33). We lay awake for some time under the starlight, smoking and spinning yarns of bygone times."



FIG. 34—Mounties and helpers at one of their outposts.

What a strong contrast to their winter camps in which all were cold and miserable! But cold or warm, wet or dry, the mounties (Fig. 34) continued to follow their paths of duty for many long years over the winding trails of the Canadian northwest.

Highway Robbery on the Trail

The Carlton Trail has only one tale of highway robbery connected with it (10). This incident occurred on July 18, 1886. At a point between

the Salt Plains and Humboldt the stage, carrying the mail and also carrying J. F. Betts and a farmer named Fiddler from Prince Albert, was held up by an armed robber. The following is an account of the affair given by the stage driver, John Art, at the trial of the hold-up man:

"About twenty-five miles south of Humboldt, and in a bluff country, a voice out of the bluff shouted 'stop!' I looked and saw a man on the edge of the bluff pointing a double-barrelled gun. The man next said 'Hands up!' I threw my hands up. He said 'Jump off your wagon!' The two passengers jumped off but I did not. He then said 'Jump or I'll shoot!' I jumped. He then ordered us away from the wagon and told us to get down on our knees. I got down, and he tied my hands with a bed cord. I saw him have a revolver in his hand. He tied Mr. Betts and made Fiddler drive the wagon. He got up on the wagon and said 'Now driver, you will save yourself some time by telling me where the box with the lock on it is. I told him I did not know of any box. When he could not find the box he cut open the mail bags, and put some of the letters in his shirt. He then said, 'I am done with you fellow.' I said I felt a bit cheap to have one man hold up three. He said, 'You needn't feel cheap, for I and my partner held up a bigger crowd than you this morning.' The robber used Mr. Bett's knife to cut open the mail bags and took his roll of money at first but later gave it back saying that he didn't want his private money. When he was through the robber backed away and disappeared behind the bluff."

It turned out that he had robbed a party of four campers the previous morning.

Subsequently a man named Garnett, who ran a ferry at St. Louis on the South Saskatchewan River was convicted of the robbery and sentenced to fourteen years in the Stony Mountain Penitentiary.

Prairie Fires Along the Carlton Trail

A number of travellers who made use of the Carlton Trail have mentioned briefly the prairie fires and their destructive influence on tree growth. Mr. McKenzie, who was in charge of the last Hudson's Bay Company post in the Touchwood Hills, has left us a vivid account (30a) of an extensive fire that swept through the Touchwood Hills while he was in charge of the trading post there.

Mr. McKenzie had been on an inspection trip to the Nut Lake post with his superior, Mr. Archibald McDonald, and the two had separated near Fishing Lake. Mr. McDonald was going on to Fort Pelly and Mr. McKenzie was returning home with a team and buggy. It was in the autumn and the weather had been very dry. Most of the sloughs were dried up and the vegetation in the meadows, marshes and woods was thoroughly desiccated. This is his story:

"I had not driven many miles when all about me ashes began to fall in flakes like a snow shower. The wind was blowing hard, an undoubted sign that a big prairie fire was in action. Coming on to a ridge I could

see smoke in the distance, in the direction of Touchwood. Prairie fires were quite common in the fall, and as a rule we did not give them any particular attention, but this fall everything was dried up and the grass was unusually long everywhere on account of the heavy rains in the early part of the season. As I drove towards it I could see that the fire was extensive, the whole country seemed to be in flames, and the fire was travelling with great rapidity with an increasing gale blowing. The heat was getting intense. The whole atmosphere seemed to be on fire. Smoke had gotten so dense that the sun was completely obscured. Bundles of grass all aflame carried by the fierce wind were falling all around me, and the wind was nearly as hot as a furnace blast. I came on to another small ridge, driving as fast as the horses could go, the poor beasts were now in a lather of foam and sweat. I could see the flames and hear their roar. I was entirely surrounded by fire, and at very close quarters from this particular one, right in front of me. The horses were frightened and so was I, but there was no time to lose if I was to save them and myself. The fire was travelling at the rate of fifteen to twenty-five miles an hour and where the grass was very long in dry sloughs it was making much faster time. I jumped out and set fire to the grass in my immediate vicinity and got the team and myself on the burnt ground. By this time the smoke was nearly suffocating us. I got in front of my team, put my blanket over their heads, and got my own head in with theirs and kept most of the smoke out of our lungs, otherwise we should have perished. It was one of the worst prairie fires, and the closest call I had ever experienced. That arm of the fire passed us with a roar, licking up everything in its path. There was no more danger of being burned to death but the intense heat still in the air was hard to endure, and the team was very restless when I took the blanket off our heads. The smoke had partially gone to leeward, and here the team and I stood alone on a ridge in the midst of a black burned wilderness, that had been so beautiful a few hours before, with the grasses and flowers waving and rejoicing in their most beautiful autumn tints.

"Water was what myself and the horses wanted now, but I knew there was none within three or four miles of us, and then it was only a small spring, which I might not be able to find, as it was some distance off the trail, and the fire had altered the appearance of the whole face of the country.

"The fire that I had just come through had started in the great salt plain, between the big Touchwood and Humboldt, sweeping right through the Quill plain over which I was then travelling. There were numerous other fires to the east and south of me as I could see by the smoke, and this section I had still to pass through. I was also very anxious about my family at the Post as I could see heavy smoke in that direction and I was still about twenty-five miles from home.

"All this had taken place in a much less time that it has taken me to write it down, although it appeared hours to me at the time.

"Water was what we now wanted, and we wanted it badly. The horses were quite badly singed about the head and breasts, and I had parted with my own eyebrows and eyelashes, and was blistered a little on the face and hands.

"I pulled on to the trail again, the horses were not feeling very gay so I let them walk along slowly for a mile or so, and then started them on a slow trot, but gave them their heads, did not tighten the reins at all, as I was in hopes they would fork off, when we came near where the spring should be, as I was sure it was still ahead of us. All land marks had been obliterated by the fire.

"We had gone quite a distance, but not nearly as far as I had thought, and I was beginning to despair, when all at once the team left the trail. I said nothing to them, but let them go their own way. I knew there was a little clump of bushes where the spring was, but I could see nothing as far as I could look ahead but burnt prairie. However, I let them go, as they seemed willing and were increasing their pace in a straight bee line for some place. I looked back and could see the buggy track as straight as a line behind us. In a few minutes I saw a few red foxes ahead of us, and some badgers and skunks, that had come through the fire; some of them were pretty well scorched, in fact their pelts would be useless for that season, and many of them would not live through the winter. Foxes that were burned like these were what we called "Samsons", and were useless.

"All this passed through my mind in an instant, when a couple of black tail deer bounced past within twenty yards of us. They had also been through the fire, and were badly singed. They disappeared over a ridge a short distance ahead. I was so thirsty by this time that I could only speak to my team with difficulty. The team started to trot as the deer passed us and just over the ridge lay the spring with a lot of these crippled and burned wild animals standing and lying near it. The poor things did not seem at all frightened at our arrival and just watched us from a short distance. We were all pilgrims in distress. I unhitched the team but allowed them only a few mouthfuls of water and took very little myself. After a little while I gave the horses all they would drink and also drank as much as I wanted myself.

"I hitched up again and started in a diagonal course until I struck the trail. I saw several foxes and prairie wolves heading for the spring. It seemed to be the only water in that part of the country at that time, and was surely a blessing to the wild animals in that vicinity. It was certainly the most precious sight that I had seen in years. I took my tea kettle full of it in the rig with me, and took a sip of it now and again.

"The wind had changed and the fires were now travelling in all directions, but towards evening it was not blowing so hard, though still very hot. The fire had crossed the trail in many places, and I had to drive through it, both the horses and myself being pretty well scorched several times. Towards sundown my team got completely played out. They could not even go at a slow walk. I unhitched them, took their harness off and rubbed them all over. There was nothing for them to eat, so we had to try it again after half an hour's rest. I saw that the fire was in round the Post but it was not the same fire that I had been in all day, it had come upon them from the east. The fires all around looked much worse as it began to get dark. I was about three miles from the Post and had now to go through fire all the way. I was sure from the look of things that the Post and everything else was burned, as I could see nothing but fire in

all the bluffs around where the Post was. I don't know how the horses or myself made the last mile and a half, but when I got there the Post was still standing, although everything was burned right up to the buildings.

"My family were all safe and so was Jamie Slater. The fire had jumped the fire guards round the Post many times, but they had been able to combat it from the buildings and stables. They had been fighting it from about noon. Mrs. McKenzie had gathered all the Indians from the reserve who could come to help, and they had certainly all worked like niggers. The fire was still being watched but all the burning was going on outside the plowed fireguards now. They had taken a lot of furniture out of the house, and piled it up in the garden, the youngest baby in the cradle among the pile. Mrs. McKenzie was a sight to behold. She had been out all day directing the Indians first at one point and then at another whenever the fire would jump the guards. She was certainly a tired woman, but had saved the Fort and her children with the aid of Slater and the Indians.

"The fire in the bluffs burned for several days, and in many of the sloughs the earth was on fire and burned all winter. Several people lost their lives in some parts. Cattle and horses died from burns; many hay stacks were destroyed. Rabbits, prairie chicken and many of the smaller fur bearing animals were burned. It was the most disastrous all over prairie fire that had been in the country during my time."



FIG. 35—Eskdale School and pupils as seen in 1910. The logs for this building were hauled over the Touchwood Trail from the Touchwood Hills. The school was situated nine miles south of Leross, Sask.

The Trail Becomes Deserted

With the completion of the branch railway line from Regina to Prince Albert in 1890, freighting over the old Trail from South Qu'Appelle to



FIG. 36—Municipal road through rolling park country between Dysart and Lestock, Saskatchewan.

Prince Albert ceased, and traffic over the Carlton Trail degenerated into short distance hauling where the trail happened to lead from new towns to the homes of ranchers and farmers. For instance, many of the German-American immigrants, who in 1903 established St. Peter's Colony, stretching from Bruno to Engelfeld, came by train to Rosthern and made use of the Carlton Trail to get from Gabriel's Crossing to their homesteads. Heavy wagons, democrats, and buggies replaced the carts and buckboards of earlier times on the Trail in summer. In winter, when snow covered the ground, sleighs and jumpers came into general use. These new vehicles brought in the settlers' effects from the nearest town after they had arrived by box-car from far off homes in Eastern Canada, Europe, or the United States. Then the necessary lumber and other building materials were hauled to the homesteads to erect houses and stables, unless the newcomer constructed his first farm buildings of logs or sod. Later the trails were utilized to take out the first trickle of grain as the new fields began to produce, and the giant sentinels of the new villages, the grain elevators, appeared in increasing numbers. At this stage in the development of new communities, building materials were hauled in for the first schools (Fig. 35) and churches, although in many cases church services were held in school houses until the homesteaders were more permanently established. At times, for a short period, supplies were freighted from established railway lines to construction gangs working on newer lines. An example of this was seen

by the writer in 1908 when the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway was being built through the Touchwood Hills.

Gradually municipal roads (Fig. 36) became established on the rights-of-way intended for the purpose, fences were erected and the traffic was diverted from the old trails to these new-fangled roads. Traffic no longer wound in leisurely curves around bluff and slough, but plunged doggedly ahead in a straight line even though in some of the rougher districts "heaven and earth" had to be moved to make this possible.

The old Trail with its accompanying telegraph line enjoyed special immunity for many years in certain parts. The writer followed it from Fort Qu'Appelle to a point fifteen miles north of Lipton in 1906, and as late as 1925 he travelled over one branch of it from Bruno to Gabriel's Crossing. Even now it is followed for part of the way from Duck Lake to the Carlton Ferry, and it can be traced across the Poor Man Indian Reserve north of Punnichy. However, for the most part it has been blocked by fences and fields, and has largely disappeared from the sight and memory of men. Only the faces of real old timers light up with an expression of understanding and affection when its name is mentioned nowadays.



Fig. 37—Fort Ellice in its later years. Note the Red River cart near the building on the left.

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